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THE TIMES

No. 64,500

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26 1992

45p

Farmers storm the streets as French threaten Gatt veto

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN PARIS AND JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

FRANCE said yesterday that it would veto a farm trade deal between the United States and the European Community, so blocking the way to a world trade agreement, unless farm subsidy cuts were renegotiated.

Pierre Bérégovoy, the prime minister, announced the Mitterrand administration's tough line on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in answer to opposition demands.

In an attempt to keep the heat on the government, 3,000 farmers staged an angry protest in Paris near the parliament, demanding the rejection of terms which they said would penalise French agriculture. In other parts of the country protesters clashed with police and blocked town-centres, roads and a railway line.

The EC Commission clashed with France by saying that the deal reached in Washington last week tallied with the EC's farm reform.

Twice M Bérégovoy answered opposition demands by saying that France would apply its veto "at all stages of the procedure". He said: "I mean to say to our European partners that we do not accept that undertakings made jointly should be thrown into doubt under pressure from the United States."

He told parliament: "Europe has advanced through successive crises. If we have to have a crisis on this matter, then there will be one." President Mitterrand, who has said nothing publicly on the farm accord since it was announced last week, was in Israel. M Bérégovoy said that he was acting in the president's name.

France considers the Washington agreement to be unacceptable because it exceeds the mandate of the EC Gatt



A French farmer in Strasbourg sprays out the word train on a rail level-crossing sign to make it read "Un GATT peut en cacher un autre" — "One GATT can hide another"

negotiations, a government statement said. It called on the EC to call an emergency meeting of agriculture and foreign ministers. "At the meeting, France will confirm that it will use its veto against any draft treaty which is against its fundamental interests," the statement added.

M Bérégovoy left open the possibility of a long delay before any veto was considered by saying it would be applied only after a "legal test" on a new Gatt accord was put forward. This could take months, possibly after parliamentary elections in March which the government is expected to lose.

Diplomats doubt that

France would rush to a showdown with its partners over farm trade, given its isolation and the potential damage to the Community and the danger of unleashing a trade war with the United States.

M Bérégovoy appealed to Britain, Germany and the other partners for understanding, recalling that France had come to others' aid in times of need. In Rome, the Italian agriculture minister, Giovanni Fontana, urged his government to consider the negative effect of the Gatt agreement on farmers and political experts said that Italian support for a French veto could not be excluded.

M Bérégovoy tried in vain

to win opposition support for a national vote to fix a national position on the Gatt accord. The Gaullist and centre-right opposition were thrown into disarray by M Bérégovoy's apparent willingness to embrace their hardline demand of recent days for a declaration of intent to use the Community veto at the earliest opportunity.

Until yesterday, ministers had been backing down from threatening an act which would have demolished President Mitterrand's efforts to promote integration and the Maastricht accord.

M Bérégovoy's pledge to use the veto was not enough to satisfy the opposition, which

was intent on avoiding the "trap" of consensus in which M Mitterrand had dragged it over the Maastricht referendum. It decided that the prime minister's statement "lacked clarity and firmness" on the timetable on which he would applying the so-called "Luxembourg compromise", or veto.

The decision, embarrassing for an opposition which felt outmanoeuvred, forced M Bérégovoy to abandon his hope for a national consensus and to submit the motion to a confidence vote. There was no chance of losing, because the Communist party had said that it would approve.

In Rome, Signor Fontana recalled that Italy produces about 92 per cent of the EC soya bean production. Soya producers already suffering from the recession would be badly hit, he said.

A spokesman for Signor Fontana said that the minister was speaking "in a personal capacity as a minister", not for the government as a whole. Italy has been represented on the Gatt question by Claudio Vitalone, the foreign trade minister.

Political sources said the cabinet of Giuliano Amato, the prime minister, is divided on the question. Most Italian industrialists are in favour of the Gatt agreement but the agricultural lobby would like to see it revised to have a less drastic effect on the soya and other sensitive sectors.

The Italian cabinet is likely to debate the issue after the foreign minister, Emilio Colombo, returns from a visit to Confirmed on page 2, col 7

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Whitehall duties may be put out to tender

BY MICHAEL DYNES, WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

MOST of Whitehall's functions could be put out to tender as the government tries to improve the performance of public services. William Waldegrave, the public service minister, said yesterday.

Unveiling the first annual report on the Citizen's Charter, he said that up to £1.5 billion worth of central government activity could be farmed out to the private sector by the end of next year in the government's overhaul of the civil service.

Sixteen months into the ten-year programme, more than 90 per cent of the government's original 150 initiatives to improve the level and quality of public services have either been met already or are in the process of being realised, Mr Waldegrave said.

These targets cover all public service activity, and include a maximum two-year wait for admission to hospital in the patient's charter, publication of schools exam performance tables (parent's charter), and rail punctuality and reliability targets (passenger's charter). The remaining 10 per cent require legislation to be implemented, he said.

Since the launch of the charter, 28 public bodies or organisations have drawn up charters outlining obligations

to the public. Five more are on the horizon, including further and higher education and the Docklands Light Railway, Mr Waldegrave said.

Marjorie Mowlam, Labour's opposition spokesman, accused Mr Waldegrave of "playing with statistics" in a forlorn attempt to convince consumers that services had improved.

Labour was not opposed to the principles behind the charter, she said, but "the public were rightly sceptical of the government's efforts". Claims of improvements in services were not borne out by people's daily experience, Dr Mowlam said.

Mr Waldegrave later insisted

that the reforms offered the best prospect of improving services. The market testing initiative, a means of testing whether the market can deliver a better service than that provided in-house, offers the best combination of value for money and quality for the consumer, he said.

The jobs of some 44,000 civil servants will be covered by the market testing initiative, including those involved in running the Treasury's economic model. Job losses will be minimal, however, as they will receive a serious setback when one of the main independent review bodies refused to co-operate with ministers over implementing the squeeze.

The doctors' and dentists' review body told the prime minister it was not prepared to operate within the 1.5 per cent increase ceiling imposed by Norman Lamont two weeks ago.

Responding to the annual report, the First Division Association, representing senior civil servants, said that market testing will put the 44,000 jobs at risk. "Government lawyers, economists, statisticians, accountants, together with other specialists, deal with highly sensitive information," it said. "They have a deep commitment to the impartiality of the public services, and a strong sense of the ethic of public service. None of this is likely to be achieved by outside contractors."

Despite the across-the-board ceiling, the government had asked the five main independent review bodies to stay in operation to distribute the modest sums available among various groups within the professions. The doctors' and dentists' review body is the first to reject the government's overtures.

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MPs vote to freeze their pay

BY NICHOLAS WOOD AND PHILIP WEBSTER

MPs voted 321-103 last night (three members of the shadow cabinet voted against) to support the government's new policy of public-sector pay restraint by accepting a freeze on their salaries, but the policy received a serious setback when one of the main independent review bodies refused to co-operate with ministers over implementing the squeeze.

The doctors' and dentists' review body told the prime minister it was not prepared to operate within the 1.5 per cent increase ceiling imposed by Norman Lamont two weeks ago.

In a direct snub to John Major, Sir Trevor Holdsworth, the chairman, said that in the light of the government's decision they felt it would be "inappropriate" to produce a report this year.

Despite the across-the-board ceiling, the government had asked the five main independent review bodies to stay in operation to distribute the modest sums available among various groups within the professions. The doctors' and dentists' review body is the first to reject the government's overtures.

Debate, page 2

Ratner pays dear for cheap joke

BY MARTIN WALLER
DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

GERALD Ratner, one of Britain's best-known retailers, has paid the price for a well-publicised slip of the tongue last year with his resignation from the board of the jeweller retailer that carries his name.

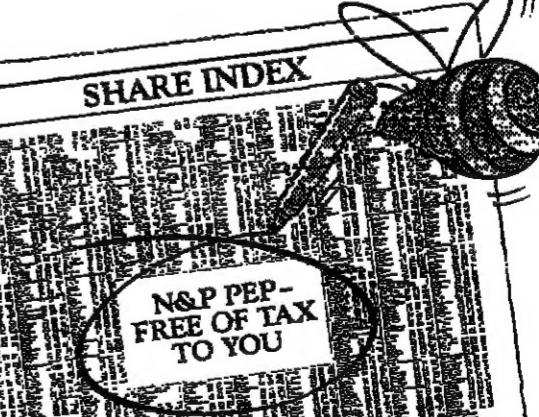
Mr Ratner's misfortunes started last year with a light-hearted remark that one of the products sold by his shops, a cheap sherry decanter, was "total crap". They ended last night with his departure as chief executive from the group he built up. He had already been ousted as chairman.

He said the continuing negative media attention he had attracted since the speech led him to believe that the decision to quit was in the interests of the group. Its downfall, mirrored by a similar spiral in the share price which set investors at Mr Ratner's throat, was due mainly to the recession and the unexpected collapse of retail sales coming after a period of expansion which had saddled Ratners with heavy debts.

But Mr Ratner's comments, to the Institute of Directors, put the seal on his career as a high-profile retail entrepreneur who, in his prime, was never slow to use publicity.

Business, page 21

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As morale ebbs, bitter miners abandon the industry by the thousand

Redundancies help British Coal towards jobs target

A disillusioned exodus from threatened and unthreatened pits is taking place against a background of record productivity

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BRITISH Coal's chances of achieving its politically sensitive 30,000 job cuts have been boosted by thousands of miners taking voluntary redundancy rather than awaiting the outcome of the government's review of the planned pit closure programme.

But the new figures on voluntary redundancy came at the same time as warnings of more than 4,500 specific job losses among mining supply companies were issued by a leading manufacturing trade union and as miners hit a productivity record.

British Coal is keeping a running tally on the number of miners applying for voluntary redundancy since it announced last month the closure of 31 pits. So far, a total of 4,600 mineworkers have either left the coal industry since then, or are in the process of doing so, according to the corporation.

The number amounts to almost one-tenth of British Coal's workforce, though BC managers doubt that this level can be sustained as unemployment nationally continues to rise.

The largest number of applications for redundancy came immediately after BC's closure announcement on October 13 with the loss of 30,000 miners' jobs. The public outcry which followed it led to the government agreeing to hold the closure of ten pits immediately threatened and to review the entire decision.

Those who have applied for voluntary redundancy come from miners across the country, and not just the pits threatened with closure. Some managers are believed to be among those who have opted to leave the industry before the government completes its review of the pit closures.

The National Union of Mineworkers said it was not surprised at the level of applications for voluntary redundancy, since miners were saying they were "fed up" with the coal industry.

The NUM said: "Morale is low and many miners just want to get out rather than wait for the outcome of the

review." Last week Arthur Scargill, NUM president, said British Coal was "blackmailing" miners into accepting redundancy.

British Coal said yesterday that miners had hit a new productivity record. Output last week averaged 6.72 tonnes of coal per man-shift — the best in the industry's history. BC said that efficiency levels were now 16 per cent higher than this time last year. At the Selby group of pits in North Yorkshire, productivity hit a new peak of 12.25 tonnes.

In addition to the government's internal review of the pit closures, the Commons' employment and industry select committee is conducting their own enquiries into the decision, and in evidence to the employment committee yesterday WED the AEEU engineering union warned that more than 4,500 jobs were directly at risk among even a small range of mining-related manufacturing companies.

A union leader claimed yesterday that closing one of Britain's two remaining naval dockyards would not save a penny until well into the 21st century and would lead to a "second great Coal Board disaster", with tens of thousands of job losses in areas already hard-hit.

The defence ministry, environment department and the Scottish office all wanted the yards at Devonport in Plymouth and Rosyth in Scotland to remain open, leaving the Treasury as the only government department calling for one to close, said union spokesman Jack Dromey.

"Keeping both yards open will be highly cost effective," said Mr Dromey, national secretary of the TGWU transport union. "Such are the costs of closing a dockyard that not one penny would be saved until at least 2010."

The government is expected to make a decision before Christmas on which yard is to be awarded future nuclear submarine refitting work.

Mr Dromey added: "The absurdity of the Treasury telling the MoD simply to concern itself with value for money out of the defence budget must end."

By PAUL WILKINSON

FRED Thompson took the money and ran because he felt he could no longer trust the government or anyone else in charge of Britain's coal industry. That, and the fact that at 50 he would be able to draw a pension, made it simple for the pit deputy to end a mining connection that has spanned three generations of his family.

"I chose to get out while there was definitely a bit of extra money going," he said. "I was told by British Coal that I would get an extra £10,000 on top of my redundancy settlement. Everyone is so frightened they will go back on their word, so I wanted to get in before they changed their minds about the incentive."

The future looks bleak for the 936 workers at Vane Tempest. Geological difficulties meant that it was earmarked for shutdown even

before its instant closure was announced in last month's review. Its coal faces are under the North Sea, up to six miles away from the pit bottom, and seaborne test drilling for new reserves was costing up to £1 million a borehole.

Now it is working through the 90-day consultation period, but Mr Thompson is convinced it will not reopen. One week after the brief reprieve, all coal production was halted and miners were ordered to clock-on each day before being sent home on full pay.

He said: "It is easy to be wise after the event, but I am glad that I have taken redundancy now. I am certain that I would have had to after the review, I feel sorry for the youngsters. I would love to see all these pits

stay open, but I can't see the review making a ha'porth of difference."

He sees little point in looking for a job in an area where one in five adults is out of work. "I know I will never get another job, certainly not in this town. I have looked at the job centres and all I see are positions for taxi drivers and security men. Who can afford a taxi when everybody's out of work?"

He plans to spend his time fishing and walking and live off his pension and the money his wife Moya brings home from her part-time job at a local school. They have one child, Lisa, 13. "We shall just have to make do with what we have," he said. "I am one of the lucky ones because I had the pension."

Beckett says plan to freeze MPs' pay is a smokescreen

By ROBERT MORGAN AND JONATHAN PRYNN

THE government's proposal to freeze MPs' pay next year was condemned by Labour last night as a sham and a shambles. Margaret Beckett, the party's deputy leader, said it was another example of the government's incompetence.

Mr Dromey added: "The

absturdity of the Treasury

telling the MoD simply to

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necessary for resources to be deployed. Under the proposals set out by Tony Newton, Leader of the Commons, members will have their pay frozen at £30,854. The parliamentary salary of ministers and those who receive a second salary, such as the Speaker and the Leader of the Opposition, would be frozen at £23,227 a year.

For years, MPs' pay has been linked to a Civil Service grade. After next year's freeze, Mr Newton explained, a new formula will have to be devised because the grade in question had disappeared. He made clear that he intended to re-establish a clear link with Civil Service pay. "We shall return to the position for 1994 and beyond, when the position is clearer." He did not wish to return to MPs' deciding their own pay every year.

He said that the government did not intend that MPs should forge a pay increase that civil servants had already had. For 1992 they had had 3.9 per cent paid in August, and in normal circumstances that would have carried through to MPs. The government did not accept that MPs should be permanently disadvantaged by 3.9 per cent.

Defending the pay freeze, Mr Newton said that restraint in current expenditure was

necessary for resources to be directed towards capital projects. It was right for the government and House to give a lead in exercising restraint.

Mrs Beckett said the freeze was not part of a coherent pay policy, not even in the public sector. "Like most of the things this government turns its hand to, it is a mess," she said. "It is not a policy, it is a smokescreen. The government have announced a wholly arbitrary limit for public sector pay and they hope, by including MPs in its provisions, to create the illusion of fairness and the impression that the higher paid are taking their fair share, a concept usually wholly absent from their thinking or policy."

Alf Morris, Labour MP for Manchester, Wythenshawe, put forward an amendment on behalf of the trustees of the members' pension fund to provide that MPs leaving the Commons within the next two years should receive a pension based on what their salary would have been had they not been subject to a pay freeze.

But he allowed the amendment to fall after hearing assurances from Mr Newton.

Mr Newton, a former pensions minister, said there was a danger that MPs would pay substantial extra contributions and get no return.



Show of frustration: miners rally outside the TUC general council's meeting in Doncaster

Pitmen quit before the cash runs out

By PAUL WILKINSON

Mr Thompson left the Vane Tempest colliery at Seaham in the Durham coalfield three weeks ago, after 34 years down the mine. "I felt I couldn't believe in anyone, particularly not the coal board or the government. There was no one left I could trust. There's no mistake they are giving all that money away to clear people out. It made sense to me to take it. It wasn't a difficult decision to take. I have my pension to fall back on. I am in Nascod (the pit deputies' union) and I can draw my pension right now, but I wouldn't have been able to if I had been in the NUM."

The future looks bleak for the 936 workers at Vane Tempest. Geological difficulties meant that it was earmarked for shutdown even

before its instant closure was announced in last month's review. Its coal faces are under the North Sea, up to six miles away from the pit bottom, and seaborne test drilling for new reserves was costing up to £1 million a borehole.

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Boy dies in police car crash

A BOY whose family fled as refugees from war-torn Somalia three months ago died yesterday after he was struck by a police car on its way to investigate a suspected mugging incident.

Malim Abdul Qadir, 12, is believed to have jumped over a safety barrier and into the path of the patrol car on a dual carriageway near his home in Moss Side, Manchester, early yesterday morning.

A policewoman from the car used mouth-to-mouth resuscitation in an attempt to revive the boy, but he died later in hospital.

Speaking through an interpreter Abdi Qadir, the boy's father, said: "We have great sadness in our family. The whole Somali community is sharing our sadness."

He said: "We know the problems of war, killings and tragedies. Our house was destroyed and we had to sell all our belongings to escape."

Between 150,000 and 300,000 people are thought to have died of starvation, disease and fighting in nearly two years of clan war and drought in Somalia.

Chief Supt Andrew Glaister said last night that the police car was a back-up vehicle and had not been involved in a pursuit.

Charles Bremer, page 12

Is Coke still it, page 14

Wall St reaction, page 21

Political sketch

Home cooking wins by a nose

"This," said Dr John Blackburn (C-Dudley W) "is essentially a domestic debate." As if to underline the point, Terry Dicks (C-Hartlepool) had just risen to interrupt the debate on a point of order.

"Madam Deputy Speaker," he said, "there's a smell of cooking coming from underneath the bench where I sit. Do we now have to cook our own meals? Could you arrange for something to be done? This smell of egg and bacon and fried bread is rather appetising."

Armed in a splendid purple robe in the Chair, Dame Janet Fookes looked about as unlikely a bed and breakfast landlady as it would be possible to imagine, and told Mr Dicks she was not sure there was much she could do about his complaint.

His interruption confirmed the judgment that this was, indeed, a domestic debate. MPs were deciding their salaries. This delicate task has placed them in a quandary. MPs' pay is pegged to a middle-ranking grade in the civil service. The government is putting a squeeze on civil servants' pay. Parliament has voted to approve this. So you think? It is natural that MPs should apply the same measure to themselves.

But of course. Opposition MPs never agreed to the public sector pay policy. So why should they now vote for a squeeze on their own salaries? Yet, if they vote against a squeeze, and launch a lobbies to rescue parliamentarians alone, what would the electorate think? Labour MPs scratch their heads and ponder the likely tabloid headlines: "MP OK COMRADE" — above a photograph of some rich leftwingers' villa in Spain.

So when, from the Opposition front bench, Margaret Beckett declared graciously that as others might wish to speak she would curtail her remarks, you could see why. She allowed herself just enough time to describe the plan as a mess, a smokescreen, a stalking horse, and an ill-thought-out shambles omitted to advise on how to clean up the mess, clear the smoke, tether the stalking horse or construct a well thought-out shambles and sat down. So much for a lead from the front bench.

Joe Ashton (Lab-Basset-

ton) did at least bring a proposal of his own. "I would be happy to accept a freeze," he said, "if the extra could be paid instead to a charity." Of course that is exactly what Norman Lamont has arranged, the nominated charity being HM Treasury, but Mr Ashton suggested his own preference: "Oxfam, for instance," he said.

The idea was not taken up by other members. A pity. Why not let them choose? One can imagine, for instance, the rollicking figure of Nicholas Soames (C-Crawley) redirecting his pay increase to the Crawley and Horsham Hunt, while Scottish minister Michael Forsyth, whose daughter keeps puff-addlers, might pledge his bonus to the national snake-fanciers' benevolent society. Dennis Skinner could nominate the Wat Tyler memorial anti-fascist league (Clay Cross section). Patrick Cormack (C-Staffs S) could send his increase straight to the Queen to help with her new boudoir, and Roy Hattersley could pitch in with support for Solo's threatened L'Escargot restaurant.

It was not to be. Dr Blackburn had a more sobered suggestion. Couldn't MPs' pay actually be docked, he asked? He explained the circumstances. When a MP dies in office (Dr B put it more grandiloquently, representing death as a kind of personal sacrifice, voluntary undertaken) couldn't every other MP have £20 taken off his pay packet, and the seating £50 X £20, £1,000, sent to the widow?

Dr Blackburn put his case affectingly, and became, himself, so moved by his own speech that he concluded by vowing "never to lay down the sword of my argument" until it had prevailed. Others were not so sure.

Sitting behind Dr Blackburn, Mr Dicks was still troubled by the eggs and bacon. I wonder whether he knows of an incident, many years ago, in which a CS gas bomb was let off in the Chamber.

An MP at that time, Sir John Foster, unaware of the source of the crippling fumes but sure he recognised them, complained to the Sergeant-at-Arms about smells from the House of Commons kitchen.

French threaten veto

Continued from page 1

Moscow. The spokesman for Signor Fontana said he did not exclude the government deciding to support a French veto "but that does not mean this will happen necessarily".

Diplomatic sources noted that President Mitterrand traditionally has a strong influence on the Italian Socialist Party of Signor Amato.

However, the agriculture minister also will be keen to avoid the prospect of a wine war, with the United States blocking imports of Italian wine if Italy supports a French veto.

French leaders in Britain yesterday condemned the threat of French violence against British lorries carrying livestock and other agricultural produce (Michael Hornsey writes). They fear a repeat of the attacks in the summer and autumn of 1990 when about

30 lorries were ambushed in a protest against cheap imports. In two incidents some 300 sheep were poisoned and burned alive.

David Nash, the president of the National Farmers' Union, last night blamed an "extremist faction" within French farming. "It is foolish to adopt a stance like that of the count of King Canute."

British farmers share some of the French worry about the impact of a Gatt settlement but say that the French will suffer no worse than anyone else.

Livestock transporters said last night they were apprehensive about possible French action, due to start next Tuesday, but were not planning to reduce consignments.

Charles Bremer, page 12

Is Coke still it, page 14

Wall St reaction, page 21

Rail delays likely after London rush-hour crash

By BILL FROST

RAIL services into London could be disrupted this morning after yesterday's collision between two trains outside London Bridge station in the morning rush-hour.

The two trains, one of which was badly damaged, would have been under the control of London Bridge signal box at the time of the crash. Geoff Harrison-Mee, divisional director of the region and a passenger on the London-bound train, said: "In theory the accident should not have been possible because this is a very modern signal box which operates a safe service."

Mr Harrison-Mee, still looking shaken after the collision, described the moment of impact: "We were just leaving the station when there was a loud bang and an electrical short circuit. The lights went out and flying glass began coming into the carriage. The window had shattered and I could see another train very

Woman told listeners she was lonely

Teenager raped on date set up by radio

By MICHAEL HORNELL

A TEENAGER who telephoned a radio phone-in programme to say that she was lonely and "looking for someone in her life" was raped by a man with whom the presenter put her in touch.

Scotland Yard said that a man calling himself "Terror" lured the woman, 17, to a house where she was attacked by him and two other men after he answered her appeal on Choice FM, a 24-hour Afro-Caribbean music station in London. The woman's ordeal was disclosed yesterday as police appealed for information from a mini-cab driver who later drove her home.

A police spokesman said: "The victim telephoned a phone-in type radio programme and gave details of herself over the air. She described herself as lonely and looking for someone in her life. A number of people responded and she was given by the DJ the telephone number of the suspect."

The woman, then living in Bromley, Kent, met the man on a blind date on November 16 and, after an evening out, was taken to a house in Stockwell, south London. She reported the assault the next day. Police have appealed for the mini-cab driver, who took her to Bromley at 2am, to contact them.

Choice FM said last night that it gave the woman "appropriate advice" before passing her the name of the man, having at first told her to go out with friends until she met the right man. A spokesman expressed the station's concern at the incident and extended its sympathies to the victim.

The station said in a statement: "At about 1.20am on November 16, a woman called in to make a dedication as part of a late-night show. It was not a lonely hearts programme but a music show where, between certain times, listeners were encouraged to call in with their dedications."

"The caller said she wanted to meet a man and asked the DJ to help her. He gave what we considered appropriate advice that if she went out with her girl friends to the right places, she would soon meet a man she liked. The caller said she wanted to tell London about her situation and our DJ replied that, by calling his show, she had already done that.

"A few minutes later a man called and said he would like to leave his number for the previous caller. Our DJ said if he rang back later he would take the number and possibly pass it on to the previous caller, if she called back.

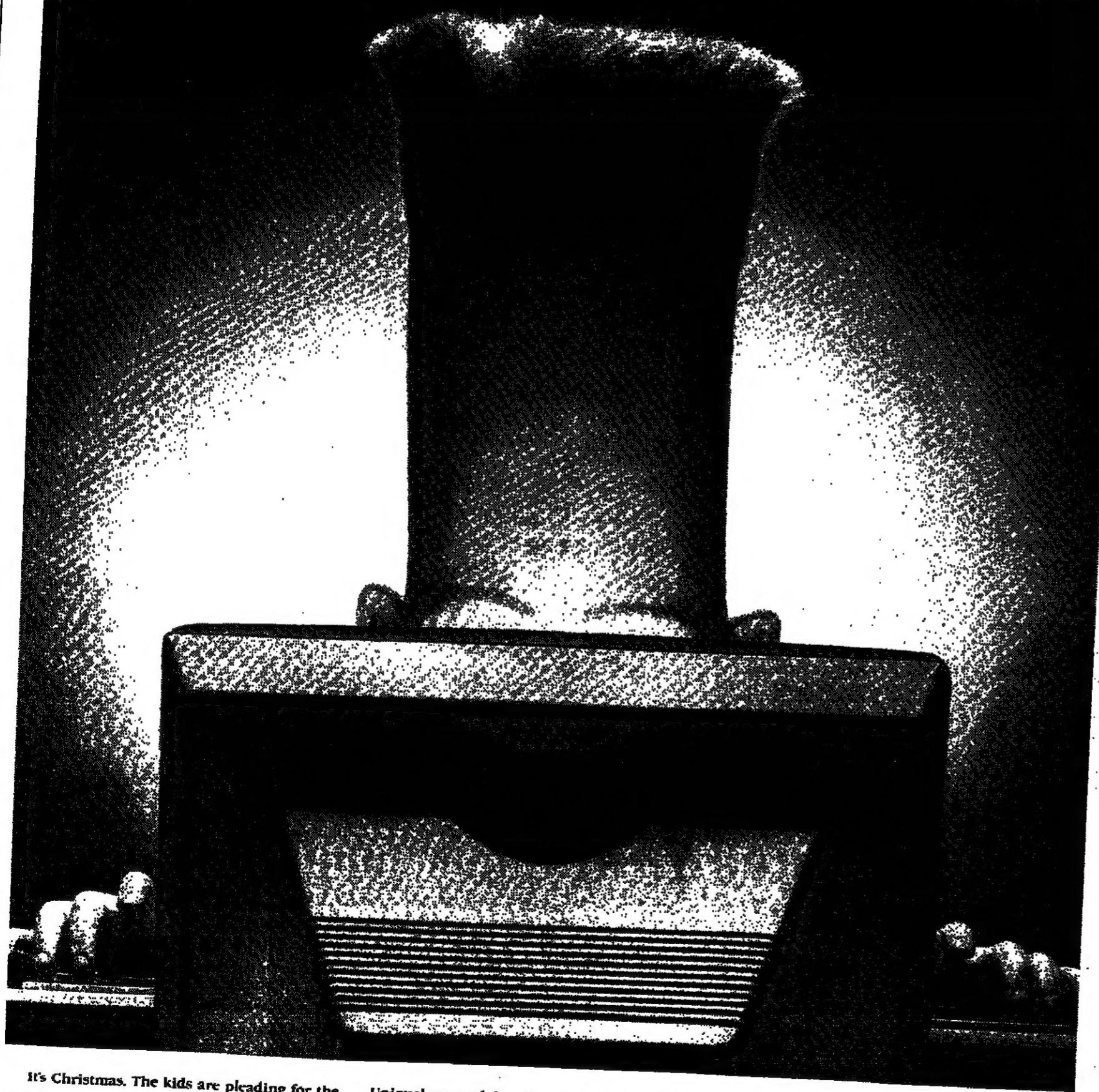
"She did call back and the DJ gave her the numbers of several callers who had enquired about her. He gave these numbers to her privately and warned her to be careful. The young woman arranged to meet one of these men and was subsequently raped and indecently assaulted."

The station kept the numbers of the callers and have given them to police.



Festive fare: Bob Maund checks mistletoe at a Christmas tree and holly auction at Tenbury Wells market, Hereford and Worcester

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made it far and away the best selling 16 bit computer in the world.

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Take it from us, if they don't already know how good the Amiga 600 is, you'll be seeing a few raised eyebrows.



BBC green paper wins praise from commercial rivals

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

BROADCASTERS yesterday warmly welcomed the green paper on the future of the BBC, relieved that the government had taken a far more open-minded view about the corporation than the Thatcher government's "doctrinaire approach" to ITV.

As the BBC prepares this afternoon to unveil its own 90-page blueprint for survival as an "efficient and accountable" public service broadcaster into the 21st century, commercial television and radio executives were quick to praise Peter Brooke, the heritage secretary, for his reasoned approach to the debate about the renewal of the BBC's royal charter in 1996.

The corporation will argue today that it should withdraw from areas where it cannot or need not make an original contribution, but not turn its back on popular programmes aimed at large audiences. It plans to occupy the high ground with innovative drama and comedy, and be the "guarantor of the national debate" with extensive news and current affairs coverage at peaktime. It is expected to move away from the more banal programmes.

Andrew Quinn, the new chief executive of ITV, said: "It is reassuring to see an understanding expressed that advertising revenue is finite and not able to fund the combined resources necessary to sustain the quality we have come to expect from both the BBC and ITV."

David Glencross, chief executive of the Independent Television Commission, said: "The ITC welcomes the green paper as evidence of the government's open-mindedness and the attention paid to the impact of any decisions about the BBC on commercial television."

Peter Baldwin, chief executive of the Radio Authority, said it planned to issue a formal response in due course. But he said: "Our first impression is that it is a very open document."



Bragg: "Lucky old BBC, good for them"

Charities seek chief for lottery hand-outs

By RUTH GLEDFIELD

A NEW body is needed to distribute the proceeds of the National Lottery to charities, according to a report published today. The lottery will be the largest single source of charitable funds, generating up to £250 million for charity, and no existing body has the capacity to distribute such a sum, the report says.

A lottery bill is expected to be published before Christmas, said the national heritage department, which is responsible for the national lottery. Royal assent could be given next summer, with tickets on sale in 1994.

Estimates of an annual lottery turnover range from £1.3 billion to £4 billion, with up to £1 billion available to spend on good

causes. The money is expected to be split between the arts, sport, heritage and charities. Some would be put into a millennium fund for large projects.

Voluntary sector income is £17 billion, including £3.5 billion donated by the general public. Lottery proceeds would represent between 0.5 per cent and 1.5 per cent of voluntary income, but even so the lottery would become the biggest grant-maker to UK charities.

The Association of Charitable Foundations report calls for a charitable board to be set up as an autonomous trust, with committees for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The board should emphasise poverty and social welfare in distributing money.

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EC convicts Britain of poor quality tap water

BY MICHAEL HORNBY AND MICHAEL McCARTHY

BRITAIN is in breach of European Community standards on drinking water, the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg ruled yesterday. It is the first time in 20 years of EC membership that the government has been found guilty of disobeying Community environmental legislation. The court is due to decide next year whether the seas off Blackpool, Formby and Southport beaches meet Community bathing standards.

The ruling comes less than three weeks before the Edinburgh summit of EC leaders to define the doctrine of subsidiarity. Water quality is one of the areas that Britain feels might be better left to member states.

Michael Howard, the environment secretary, said that the court's decision should be put into perspective. There had been judgments on environmental issues against every other EC country except Portugal, which was allowed numerous relaxations of Community law because it joined only recently.

Mr Howard said in Copenhagen, where he was representing Britain at a meeting on the Montreal Protocol to save the ozone layer: "By the end of this year we shall have complied with the drinking water directive in 12 of the areas concerned and in the remainder by 1995."

Our contention to the court was that it was not practicable to comply in these areas any sooner. There was no danger



Husband cleared of raping his bride

A Pakistani hotel chief was yesterday cleared of raping his bride on their wedding night. The jury was told that the man, aged 27, and the British-born Muslim woman of 19 took part in a hastily arranged marriage so that he could extend his six-month visitor's visa. The husband's counsel, Roger Keen QC, said that the girl had made the rape allegation to enable her to escape the marriage. "It is a terrible thing for a girl brought up and educated in England to be compelled to marry someone she hardly knows," he said.

The bride, from Newcastle upon Tyne, said that although she disliked the man she agreed to marry him under pressure from her family. The couple married in a Muslim ceremony ten days after their only meeting, followed by a register office wedding in Sheffield, where the man was staying with relatives after taking a hotel management course in Italy.

He told the jury that the woman's mother had agreed that he could have the choice of her three teenage daughters, and he had no idea that his bride was against the arrangement. The husband said that although the couple slept together, he had not attempted to have sexual intercourse with his wife. He had agreed to a no-sex pact until they knew each other better. He had no need to extend his stay because he had a good job in Pakistan.

Body found in suitcase

The body of a woman aged 46 has been found in a suitcase at a guesthouse in Swindon, Wiltshire, after the landlady noticed blood trickling through a ceiling. Christine Campbell, from Swindon, a divorced mother of two grown children, had been sexually assaulted and strangled in the guesthouse before her body was moved to the attic. She had dark curly collar-length hair, and was wearing a black coat, a black pencil skirt, a light green crew-necked woolen jumper and black shoes. Police want to question anyone who may have seen her in Pasha's or Vadim's night clubs in Swindon on Wednesday last week, or a taxi driver who may have taken a woman to the guesthouse.

Chess wins continue

The England team yesterday continued its unbeaten run in the European team chess championship in Debrecen, Hungary, beating Holland in the fourth round by 2½ points to 1½. Michael Adams won his match and remains unbeaten in the competition, while Nigel Short, Tony Miles and Jon Speelman managed draws. Russia, which beat the Ukraine 2½ to 1½, still leads with 12 from 16 points, followed by England and Lithuania on 10½ points and Bulgaria, Holland and Israel on 10.

Two nurses suspended

Two nursing staff at Ashworth special hospital, Merseyside, have been suspended after investigations into a "stream of hateful literature" directed at staff and patients. Further enquiries among staff are in progress. Ashworth has 650 mentally disordered patients detained in special security, and 1,400 staff, 900 of them nurses. A full report into the spread of extremist propaganda directed chiefly at hospital staff will be given in the new year after the investigation by two former police chiefs.

Weeks of manoeuvring and uncertainty will follow general election vote

Irish politicians jockey for power

BY EDWARD GORMAN, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

POLITICAL leaders in the Irish Republic today began what could be more than two weeks of intense post-election manoeuvring for power.

As soon as the first indications of a result are known sometime this afternoon, the complex process of coalition-building in a hung parliament will begin. Most observers believe the uncertainty could continue until December 14, when the Dáil is due to resume and a new Taoiseach will be elected.

At the last election in 1989, the republic was left effectively without a government for almost a month while Charles Haughey, then Fianna Fáil leader, gradually came to terms with his party's first ever coalition government, propped up by independents. are possibilities.

In this election, the main features have been the failure of Fianna Fáil to improve its position, the resurgence of the Labour party which may add as many as nine seats to its 16

and the introduction of a new programme to implement the nitrate limit.

Twenty-one of the supply zones are in the Anglian Water region and five in the Severn-Trent Water region. The three other zones are managed by the Three Valleys Water Company, north of London, and the South Staffordshire company. About 800,000 people – 1.5 per cent of the population of England and Wales – are connected to public water supplies in these zones.

Michael Swallow, director of The Water Companies' Association, which represents 23 supply companies, said: "This judgment needs to be put in context. In 1991, 97.2 per cent of 41,500 water samples tested for nitrate complied with EC standards."

Nitrate in water has been linked to the "blue-baby syndrome" – oxygen deficiency in infants – and was at one time thought to play a role in stomach cancer. Most scientists now agree the risks have been exaggerated.

Much of the nitrate in water is attributed to the delayed effect of ploughing up millions of acres for food production in the second world war, which released large amounts of nitrogen locked up in the soil.



Decision: a man voting yesterday in Dublin

to be looking for at least four cabinet posts and some junior ministerial positions.

First indications of the results of the three abortion referendums, also voted on yesterday will be known this afternoon, but counting is not expected to be completed until tomorrow.

Village goes slow in poll spoilt by choice

THE voters of Naul seemed confused and exasperated by the choice facing them in their community hall yesterday (Edward Gorman writes).

While polling in the country as a whole may have been officially described as "brisk", in Naul – a small farming village about 17 miles north of Dublin – voting had, as usual, been slow by midday. Carmel Nugent, a cheerful mother of three, and presiding officer who has organised elections in the village for more than a decade, said about 10 per cent of the 570 registered voters had been in by lunchtime. Most would vote in the evening after returning from work in Dublin.

Facing them were no fewer than four piles of ballot papers. The yellow general election forms listed ten separate candidates in the Dublin North constituency, four of whom will be returned to the Dáil under the single transferable vote system. The choice in Naul was from two Independents, two Fine Gael,

7

three Fianna Fáil, one Green, one Labour, and one Sinn Féin candidate.

Next to those forms were the three abortion referendum ballots. The green one was the proposal on travel likely to be approved, the red one was on information (also likely to be approved), and the white one was the all important abortion amendment, or the so-called "substantive issue" (likely to be rejected).

Mrs Nugent said she believed people were confused by the referendum choices and jaded at the prospect of voting in a general election. "This time a lot of people just aren't going to come out to vote because they are just fed up," she said.

Outside, in the small main street, election posters strung up on lamposts were already starting to fall down. Most were for the Fianna Fáil troika of candidates in the constituency, bearing out Mrs Nugent's analysis that, in Naul, most people usually vote Fianna Fáil.

At eight o'clock last night, Carlos Sainz and Luis Moya took the chequered flag and emerged as winners at the climax of another exciting Lombard RAC Rally.

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THE TIMES THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26 1992

Forty years and £21 million later, the Monkswell Manor murder mystery is still packing them in

AMBASSADORS THEATRE, West St, Cambridge Circus, W.C.2
Monday to Friday: 7.30 Saturday: 2.15 and 8.00 Thursday: 2.30 Matinee: 3.15
Ticket: £14, £16, £20 Dress Circle: £17, £18, £20 Pic: £20.00
Peter Saunders presents
Richard Attenborough
Sheila Sim
THE MOUSETRAP
by Agatha Christie
With
Jessica Spencer
Aubrey Dexter
Mighton O'Doherty
Allan McClelland
John Paul
and
Martin Miller
DIRECTED BY PETER GATES **DESIGNED BY Roger Furse**

Of mice and men: the 1952 production, left, featured John Paul and Jessica Spencer; right, as Giles Ralston and Miss Carewell. Yesterday, centre, the pair met Kenneth Price and Karen Davies, who play their characters now



Audiences get caught by the Mousetrap tale

By ALISON ROBERTS, ARTS REPORTER

THE prime minister pledged his support for the arts yesterday at a fortyth anniversary party for *The Mousetrap*. John Major was the mystery guest at the party at the Savoy Hotel for the Agatha Christie play whose run has spanned nine British prime ministers.

Mr Major, who saw the play before entering No 10, said that he had read all Christie's novels. "I spent a year lying on my back after a fairly miserable car crash and I basied myself by reading everything she had written."

Mr Major voiced support for the arts, calling them an integral part of British life. "I believe profoundly that we ourselves have in this country with the arts, orchestras, theatres and plays. I know of no city in the world that can beat what is available in London day in, day out."

Tourists come to London just to see *The Mousetrap*, and nine and a half million people now know who done it. During its first year, when Mr Major trotted along to Cheam Common Primary School, sweet rationing ended, Stalin died and Eisenhower became United States president.

The Monkswell Manor Guest House mystery has inspired a new cast and a new adjective every year. In the tenth year it was "imperishable"; the fifteenth "unashamed" and in the twentieth "proud". No fortyth anniversary catchword has yet been coined, but many would call it "recession-proof". *The*

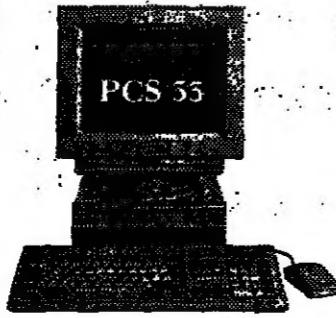
MP likens banks to robbers

By TONY DAWKES

HIGH street banks were described as latter-day highwaymen yesterday as MPs from the three main parties attacked them for high interest rates, overcharging and not handling complaints properly.

The MPs intend to put down an early day motion in the Commons this week supporting the Bank Action Group's call for an independent enquiry into banking practices and for compensation and damages for those who have been overcharged.

To begin with you don't need a complicated instruction manual full of technospeak; instead you'll find a pre-loaded



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- 386SX Microprocessor (16MHz) • 2MB RAM (expandable up to 10MB) • Hard disk capacity 40MB • Mouse PS/2 compatible • Software pre-installed on hard disk: Tutorial and User Guide, MS-DOS 5.0, Windows 3.1, Norton Antivirus, DoubleDisk Compressor • SCART TV Connector
- Free "Action Set" games pack • 12 months on-site warranty

TV pair banned

Glynog Davies, a television reporter, and Dafydd Evans, a researcher, were banned for a year from working for S4C after offering President Saddam Hussein editorial control of a documentary about the jailed Briton Paul Ride.

Boy goes home

Jack Leonard, the five-week-old Liverpool baby given "keyhole" brain surgery last week, has been allowed home.

Happy returns

Books, tapes and records worth £116,000 have been returned to Derbyshire libraries in a two-week amnesty.

Burgeoning charters hailed as a revolution or dismissed as a £24 million public relations hoax

Britons start to master the art of complaining

■ Government plans to overhaul the public services are still seen by sceptical citizens as a public relations exercise

BY MICHAEL DYNES, WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN has never been renowned for its quality of service, at least in the eyes of its foreign critics. It has tolerated rudeness from rail staff, rudeness from waiters and the petty tyrannies of government officials.

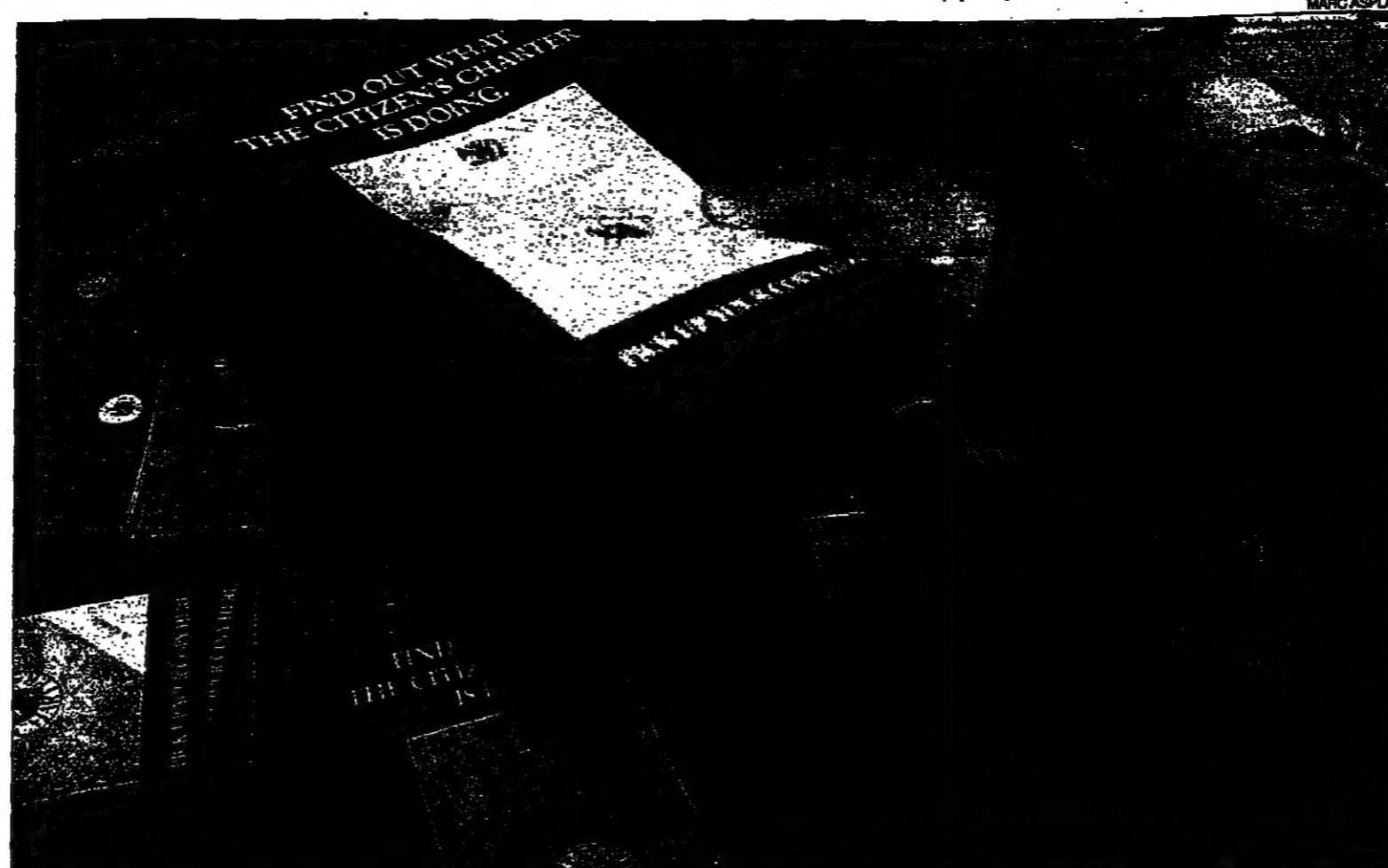
Under the citizen's charter, the first annual report on which was published yesterday, all that could be about to change. Instead of being mocked as a nation prepared to endure almost any indignity, the British seem set to master the art of complaining.

While supporters and critics of John Major's initiative debate whether the citizen's charter constitutes a new philosophy of government or an elaborate public relations hoax, new guidelines are being drawn up across the public sector which spell out the level and quality of service to which citizens are entitled. Even the name represents a break with a past in which the people were merely subjects.

The new Citizen's Charter Unit is accountable to William Waldegrave, the public service minister. It has 27 staff and a budget of £24 million for the next three years, most of which will be spent teaching the British their rights. The unit is responsible for ensuring that the charter eventually permeates all levels of government, an exercise expected to take the best part of a decade.

So far, 28 charters have been published, including British Rail's passenger's charter, the Inland Revenue's taxpayer's charter and the courts charter. Five more are in the pipeline, concerning further and higher education and the Docklands Light Railway.

Each charter seeks to pro-



Rights issue: copies of the first annual report on the citizen's charter, published yesterday to a mixed reception

Helplines offer key to service

BY IAN MURRAY

INFORMATION about all the 28 charters, including helplines and addresses can be obtained by ringing 0345 300130 (calls at local rates). A leaflet explaining what has been done can be obtained on freephone 0800 100 101.

They had seen reductions in funding for legal aid and Citizens' Advice Bureaux and were less concerned with minor changes in utility services than with the high salaries that utility company chairmen were receiving.

Several MPs cited reports that BR wanted to lower its punctuality targets as evidence that the charter was failing to improve standards. Dr Mowlam said: "People's daily experience of BR isn't a satisfaction with the publishing of punctuality and reliability targets but the actuality of the slashing of the Department of Transport's budget."

Mr Waldegrave came under strong pressure from Labour and Conservative MPs to make sure that the courts charter increased access. Tory MP John Butcher and Michael Jopling said there were concerns that legal services were now beyond the reach of many.

Charter assessment, page 1
Diary, page 16
Leading article, page 17

ter (VAT) and traveller's charter (Customs and Excise); document setting out complaints procedure issued in September and traveller's charter in January. Both are being surveyed.

□ Patient's charter: 900,000 requests received for full version of charter. Numbers waiting more than two years cut from 51,000 to five. All

regional health authorities have helplines. NHS freephone helpline, 0800 22 44 88, covers England, Wales and Scotland.

□ Parent's charter: Parent's right to know about schools met by publication of comparative exam tables last Wednesday. 5,000 people have since rung education department's freephone number, 0800 211 112 for a copy.

□ Inland Revenue: IR says it set up prototype charter in 1986. Complainants can raise queries locally even if their tax is administered elsewhere.

□ Jobseeker's charter: redundancy payments service charter (employment department): Department is cutting waiting time in Jobcentres and waiting for phone.

□ Benefits agency customer charter: Freephone number, 0800 666 555, receives 1.5 million calls every year.

Custody cases should be brought to trials within eight weeks of committal, while

cases where defendants are on bail should be brought to trial within 16 weeks of committal, the charter says.

Slack service by court staff should also be a thing of the past. The charter outlines deadlines within which court officials will have to respond in busy areas of court business such as divorce, probate and debt telephone calls, for instance, must be answered within 30 seconds.

People using the courts are to be sent maps of how to get there, details of catering facilities and the name of someone to speak to at court for more information. At court, they

Waiting limits set for start of trial

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE down-at-heels, unfriendly image of courts with no waiting areas and long delays is to be tackled under a new framework published yesterday which sets target waiting times and guarantees national standards of service to witnesses, defendants and jurors.

The Courts Charter requires courts to publish the time within which they can provide a hearing in a civil case once the parties are ready for trial, and in criminal cases to conform to a timetable for bringing cases to trial.

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cases where defendants are on bail should be brought to trial within 16 weeks of committal, the charter says.

Slack service by court staff should also be a thing of the past. The charter outlines deadlines within which court officials will have to respond in busy areas of court business such as divorce, probate and debt telephone calls, for instance, must be answered within 30 seconds.

People using the courts are to be sent maps of how to get there, details of catering facilities and the name of someone to speak to at court for more information. At court, they

should find clear signposts, courteous and prompt service from court staff who will wear name badges" and notices telling them how to complain.

In criminal cases, worried witnesses can ask to be shown a courtroom before the case starts. Standards are also set for jury service. Jurors are to be shown a recently made video describing their duties in a trial and what happens.

The Lord Chancellor said the charter was a "public commitment to quality" in the service the courts strove to provide. However, he warned against too great expectations in the area of the court service. "The justice system is complex. The interests of those involved, and even the objectives of justice itself, are various and, in some respects, conflict."

A spokesman from his department added: "It is not like British Rail aiming to get its passengers comfortably and safely into Waterloo on time." Imposing uniform standards was difficult to achieve because of the different sizes of court users.

Paul Boateng, Labour's legal affairs spokesman, said the charter "seeks to hide an increasingly run down and under-resourced system of civil and criminal justice behind a glossy veneer that bears no relation to the reality of the courts system".

Major's town gives package 'no' vote

BY KATE ALDERSON

A RETIRED civil servant who has lived in the prime minister's Huntingdon constituency all his life is unimpressed with his "big idea", the citizen's charter.

"I don't know anyone who has got any satisfaction from this charter business," Ronald Pankhurst said. "It is an insult to the citizen's intelligence. It's just another stunt."

Ian Young, from Biddenham, called the charter "a crocodile without any teeth". He said: "The citizen's charter doesn't give you very much at all. Look at the call-out time for ambulances in London. What good has the charter done? If there were mandatory powers to force people to give you a better service, then something might get done."

Jeanie Nightingale, an office worker, read the charter to see how it would affect her rights. She remains unmoved. "It doesn't seem to be going

into practice. Waiting lists are still too long. I have a friend who has been told that he must wait four months just for an X-ray. It's a lot of empty promises."

Few people seemed aware of the 28 charters published by public bodies, but inside Huntingdon's library a big blue and white stand displays glossy blue leaflets.

At the Citizens' Advice Bureau Joy Western, the assistant manager, said: "People are not really interested in it. We don't have many enquiries about it. If there's no power under law to make services better then people think 'What's the point?'"

At Huntingdonshire District Council offices there was some confusion over the charter. The receptionist spoke to a council officer and said: "I've been told that Cambridge County Council deal with some parts of the charter, we don't here. I've been told to give you this telephone number and the name of a man who might be able to tell you about it. I don't know who he is, but his name is William Waldegrave. I hope he can help you."



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Giant iceberg re-routes the ship of state

MOST government initiatives are taken more seriously than they deserve. The citizen's charter has suffered the reverse fate. It has been widely derided as a gimmick which fails to tackle flaws in public sector provision. But that is both to underestimate the seriousness of the prime minister's commitment and to patronise the public about understandable worries.

Yesterday's white paper underlines the extent of the shake-up in government. The performance targets are only the public face of what William Waldegrave yesterday described as a shift towards management by contract and by explicit objectives. They form part of what Stephen Dorrell, financial secretary to the Treasury, on Monday called a "long march" through Whitehall.

Ironically, this Maoist attempt to create a permanent revolution in government is being spearheaded by two ministers, Mr Waldegrave and Mr Dorrell, who are viewed with suspicion by the Thatcherites. In practice, what Mr Waldegrave was yesterday presenting as a new synthesis has diverse roots, some going back to Sir Edward Heath's "quiet revolution" of the early 1970s.

Of course, there are holes in the charter approach. The setting of formal targets leads to distortions that leave customers dissatisfied. But there have been real advances in setting standards. Despite continuing scepticism, everyone now has to be character-minded. James Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, has overcome the conservatism of the legal establishment to produce a court charter.

The most significant changes are happening beneath the surface to ensure that the published targets can be met. Until the last couple of

years, central government, both senior mandarins and civil service unions, had largely resisted changes in structure, such as contracting-out, which it imposed on local government. But this is now changing. As Mr Dorrell said, instead of the traditional question of "what can we sell?" the question will increasingly be "what must we keep?"

This will, he argued, lead to a distinction between the purchase and provision of services, as already applies in the NHS. So, even where the state is still responsible for certain services, central government will not necessarily remain the provider as well as the purchaser. This means not just privatisations but also the subcontracting of support functions.

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THE TIMES

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مكتبة الأصل

NUMBER 26 1992
AROUND THE LOBBY
Challenge to Tories on income



Stand-off gamble: General Philippe Morillon says the Serb military has not kept agreements

Belgrade gangland killing unveils link to the death squads

By ROGER BOYES, EAST EUROPE CORRESPONDENT

Connections between the Serbian underworld and the killing squads in Bosnia have been revealed by the gangland murder of a "capo" in the Belgrade Hyatt Hotel.

Alexander Knezevic, 22, ran a restaurant protection racket using scores of criminals who fought in Croatia and Bosnia. Knezevic — nicknamed "Knele" or "Kne" — dabbled in prostitution and gun-running. He became rich, drove a Porsche, wore heavy gold chains and a Rolex watch. Nobody knows who shot him.

Arkan, whose real name is Zeljko Raznatovic, controls a paramilitary group, the Tigers, that "ethnically cleaned" Vukovar in Croatia last year and has been planning eastern Bosnia.

At the height of the Bosnian war, Arkan was said to be training 1,000 militiamen a week. He, too, has become wealthy, originally on loot from Bosnia and then from his various rackets in Serbia.

Although he is wanted for robbery in Amsterdam, Brussels, Rome and Stockholm, he is virtually immune from arrest in Serbia. He has a controlling interest in the Delija elective agency that offers protection service to the Belgrade casinos. Many of the black-market currency exchanges run by Arkan and he has taken tentative steps towards respectability by opening an official bank.

Another gangster-warlord is Dragolav Bokan, formerly a philosophy lecturer at Belgrade University, who runs two paramilitary groups, the White Eagles and the powerful Dusar unit. His groups are said to be responsible for many massacres in Croatia.

Bush seeks monitors for Kosovo

From Jon Macintyre in Washington
PRESIDENT Bush has asked France and Britain to set up with America an international civilian force to monitor Serb attacks on the Albanian majority in Kosovo.

He has become concerned at the fate of Albanians in Kosovo after intelligence reports that the Serbian government was providing Serbian civilians with weapons and confiscating the arms of Albanians, while increasing Serb military activity in the Albanian enclave. Officials fear that if the war spreads to Kosovo (where the population is 90 per cent ethnic Albanian), it could trigger greater conflict in the Balkans.

The Bush proposal, sent to both John Major and President Mitterrand, also encouraged them to support demands for a restoration of autonomy in Kosovo, according to *The New York Times*.

Former officials, some congressmen and the United Nations have urged more radical intervention in Kosovo, but Dick Cheney, the defence secretary, and General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, strongly oppose the direct involvement of United States forces.

UN suspends help to Serbian community after local commanders ignore agreement to let convoy pass

Bosnian Serbs block aid to Muslim enclave

By TIM JUDAH IN LJUBLJANA
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

RELATIONS between the United Nations and Bosnian Serb leaders were plunged into crisis yesterday as Serb military commanders barred the progress of a UN convoy destined for Srebrenica, one of the last big areas of Muslim resistance. The UN suspended all humanitarian aid to Serbs in Bosnia until the same assistance can be delivered to Srebrenica, and a tense stand-off was beginning.

"We will sit on the border for days, if needs be," said Lyndall Sachs, spokeswoman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as the convoy of 20 lorries waited on the Serbian bank of the Drina river. A reconnaissance party that tried to cross was met with a lowered frontier post. On the Serbian bank, locals sneered at the UN and shouted at journalists: "Go home, pigs."

Close to Gorazde, another besieged Muslim enclave, a UN armoured personnel carrier hit a landmine, but no

one was injured. The convoy was reported to be waiting until other mines had been cleared before proceeding.

The UN also said yesterday it was interrupting its humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo after a French aid plane was hit by small-arms fire. A spokesman said the flights may be resumed today.

Despite explicit permission given by General Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb military leader, local commanders said yesterday that they had no authority to let the Srebrenica convoy pass. Major General Philippe Morillon, the UN overall commander in Bosnia, has complained of Serb failure to honour previous agreements.

On Tuesday, Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, told the UN permission for the convoy to be withdrawn because of fighting round the enclave, but Mrs Sachs said: "We learnt from our own sources that there were no security prob-



lems. From the Serbian bank of the Drina, the occasional rumble of artillery or mortars could be heard coming from the hills.

The enclave of Srebrenica has shot to the top of the UN agenda because its estimated 80,000 inhabitants, including 26,000 refugees, have

when Serb militiamen torched the Muslim village of Hraca, two miles outside Bratunac, killing four people. Since then, the Muslims have retreated into the Srebrenica enclave and have mounted hit-and-run guerrilla operations, burning down surrounding Serb villages.

Serb commanders are desperate to starve out Srebrenica because they cannot defeat it militarily. What is not clear is whether the decision is being taken by "renegade elements" at a local level or at the very top. One UN officer said yesterday that he believed the orders came from General Mladic himself but that "it is part of the military strategy to pretend the blockage is at the local level".

Desperate pleas for help are being radioed out of Srebrenica, saying that thousands are without adequate shelter, food supplies have virtually run out, and that gastric and other diseases are beginning to spread.

Both the Bosnian Serbs and the UN are playing for high stakes. The Serbs have

decided to forgo their share of international aid, except in the Sarajevo area, in order to crush Srebrenica. The UN is gambling because 50 per cent of assistance now reaching Sarajevo comes by road from Belgrade and could be cut off by the Bosnian Serbs at a moment's notice.

Meanwhile, in Istanbul yesterday Turkey convened a meeting of the nations most directly threatened by the spread of fighting in the former Yugoslavia. Representatives from countries including Italy, Hungary, Croatia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania and Albania called for the UN to deploy troops throughout the region.

In Geneva, the UN agreed to exempt from sanctions an emergency mission being sent to Montenegro to repair the flood-threatened dam at Majkovač. The European Community said it would give \$135,000 (£89,000) to help repair the dam, which was damaged in floods and threatens to spill seven million tonnes of toxic waste into the Balkan river system.

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Community undermines key French argument

FROM GEORGE BROCK AND TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

THE European Commission undermined last night one of France's key arguments against the European-American deal on farm subsidies by agreeing that the settlement struck in Washington last week fits in with the European Community's agricultural reform.

The commissioners agreed to send their analysis of the agreement to governments today. A spokesman, asked if the report confirmed that the EC-US deal was compatible with EC farm reform, said: "That it does."

The relief felt throughout the Community's capitals since the shadow of a trade war disappeared has shown that France has no solid allies against a world trade deal which may be completed in months. Bonn is signalling that even its normal closeness with Paris would not persuade its ministers to tolerate further obstruction. With a trade liberalisation treaty promising a boost for battered economies, French blocking tactics would trigger an EC crisis that would finish off the fragile Maastricht treaty.

The French government's tactics now seem directed at two Partisan shots delivered in retreat. The Socialist government, which will almost certainly lose power next March, would like to see its centre-right successors forced to cope with the unpopular fall in farm incomes. All delay helps. Paris wants to be bought off with extra compensation for its farmers. An air of crisis adds strength to its bargaining leverage.

If France did use its right of veto, the EC would find itself in a legal minefield. The Community takes its key decisions by unanimity: a state can block revisions to the EC's basic treaty and other policies. In three important areas, the rules allow governments to settle issues by "qualified majority": trade policy, agriculture and single market laws.

To wield its veto, France would first have to create an opportunity for its use — and most states are determined to have only one decision on a General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade treaty, and to take that as late as possible. Since 108 governments still have 14 sections of a new treaty to fine-tune in Geneva, the EC's final approval will not be required

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British officials said there would be three key problem areas for the negotiations — fishing, farming and whaling. Norway has failed in three previous applications. (Rewire)

"We just don't believe a word the government is saying. We know what they're up

to. They're going to sell us out just like the CAP common agricultural policy," said Alain l'Hopital, a farmer from the Rhône region who led a group among some 3,000 on the Esplanade des Invalides, near the National Assembly on the Left Bank. Four Métro stations were closed and traffic jammed over the Seine as the protests went on, but police fears of widespread violence were not borne out.

However, the promise yesterday from Pierre Bérégovoy, the prime minister, that the government would use its veto if the EC failed to answer France's grievances did little to quell the anger among the farmers. Late in the afternoon squads of militant young farmers clashed with the CRS riot police as they tried to approach the agriculture ministry on the nearby Rue de Varennes.

Angry agriculteurs, outnumbered by the television crews, hurled firecrackers and

protests this week against what is seen as British complicity in the Gatt (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) deal with Washington. The militant Co-ordination Rural Union has promised to intercept all British lorries carrying farm produce from next Tuesday if the Gatt accord is not scrapped.

Farmers insist that thousands of smallholders will be driven off the land if France accepts the Gatt agreement, which limited subsidised production and subsidised farm exports outside the EC.

Some 70 tractors surrounded the airport at Lille, in the north, and hay bales were burnt. Police stopped them from driving onto the airfield. About 200 people also blocked the Calais-Switzerland railway by dumping several tonnes of potatoes and burning hay bales on the line at Strazeele in Flanders.

Farmers tried but failed to block the A1 motorway leading to Brussels and the Channel French ports. In Boulogne, farmers burned a Union flag in one of many

protests last night they were apprehensive about possible French action, due to start next Tuesday, but were not planning to reduce consumption.

Veto threat, page 1
Is Coke still in page 14?
Rural tradition page 16



Taming the fury: a Breton farmer being arrested in Saint Brieuc during a demonstration by about 600 against the Gatt accord between the European Community and America. Farmers threw petrol bombs at police and burnt the Stars and Stripes. Elsewhere in France, protesters attacked a McDonald's and dumped US produce

Enraged farmers take on police in day of protests

BY CHARLES BRENNER IN PARIS AND MICHAEL HORNBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

As French MPs prepared to vote on the government's hardline rejection of the EC-US farm accord, thousands of angry farmers disrupted traffic and destroyed property in Paris and half a dozen French cities yesterday.

Forty-four police officers were hurt in the Paris demonstration, mainly by projectiles, police said. Only one received hospital treatment. Though incidents were reported up and down the country, the authorities said the demonstrations were mild in comparison with protest days earlier this year.

Suspicion that the Socialist government will not follow through on its promise to defend French agriculture fuelled the protests, which ranged from disrupting the Paris stock exchange to an attack on a McDonald's fast-food restaurant in Bordeaux.

"We just don't believe a word the government is saying. We know what they're up

Yeltsin throws aide to hardline wolves

FROM ANNE McELVOY IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Yeltsin yesterday sacrificed one of his closest political allies and personal friends, Mikhail Poltoranin, a deputy prime minister and information minister, in an attempt to save his reforms from assault by conservatives in the powerful Congress of People's Deputies.

Mr Poltoranin is a well-known liberal whose outspoken attacks on hardliners have placed him high on the hit list of six ministers whose sacking has been demanded by the main opposition Civic Union as its price for supporting Mr Yeltsin's administration in next week's session of Russia's "super-parliament".

He said yesterday that his resignation was intended to guard Mr Yeltsin against opposition manoeuvring at "a crucial moment for Russia's future". The speed with which Mr Yeltsin accepted his resignation indicates that the president has surrendered to the inevitability of losing some key radicals from his team in order to stabilise his government, apparently the majority of the alliance of military and industrial figures making up Civic Union's core.

The decision to sacrifice Mr Poltoranin may well be an early tactic to placate the conservatives and keep the congress short to limit further damage to Mr Yeltsin's reform team.

The Russian leader is spending the run-up to the congress doing deals with his enemies in the hope of salvaging the rudiments of his reforms at the Kremlin session of mainly hardline deputies.

Mr Yeltsin is exhibiting an impressive ability to fight back from a position of weakness in

Rescue for ozone layer speeded up

FROM MICHAEL McCARTHY IN COPENHAGEN

ENVIRONMENT ministers and officials from nearly 100 countries yesterday more than doubled the speed of phasing out chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), the chemicals that have been destroying the world's ozone layer.

The meeting in Copenhagen agreed to bring forward the CFC phase-out deadline from January 1, 2000 to January 1, 1996, and set targets to eliminate a range of other ozone-damaging substances. This was the third and stiffer timetable agreed in the five-year life of the Montreal Protocol.

If the union succeeds in displacing these figures, it will herald the end of the predominance in government of liberals who rose in the Gorbachev years and proved themselves loyal to Yeltsin when during his fall from grace as Moscow party chief in 1987 and again during the 1991 coup.

The indications are that Mr Yeltsin accepted his resignation after the president's speech to the congress, in which he said that the "most important thing is to continue the process of reform".

The worst years are still to come, he said, between 1995

and 2005, with the amount of ozone-destroying chlorine

in the atmosphere expected

to peak around the turn of

the century at about four

parts per billion. It would be

the middle of the next century before the level returned to

that of the early 1980s.

Refugees attacked near Kohl's home

FROM JOHN HOLLAND IN BERLIN AND RICHARD BREESTON IN JERUSALEM

EVEN while Helmut Kohl, the chancellor, warned the Bundestag about "rising violence" in Germany, his home state of Rhineland-Palatinate was the setting for new race hatreds that threatened to destroy Germany's democratic image.

About 20 right-wing extremists, chanting "Sieg Heil" and "Germany for Germans", attacked a trailer park filled with refugees, smashing windows before escaping without trace. None of the 36 foreigners was hurt during the night attack in the town of Weisenheim am Sand, just a few miles from Herr Kohl's private home in Oggersheim, near Ludwigshafen.

There has been international uproar in the wake of the firebombings on Monday in Mönchberg, in which two Turkish girls and a woman were killed, with some Jewish and Turkish leaders demanding that their followers should take up the armed struggle against the fascist thugs.

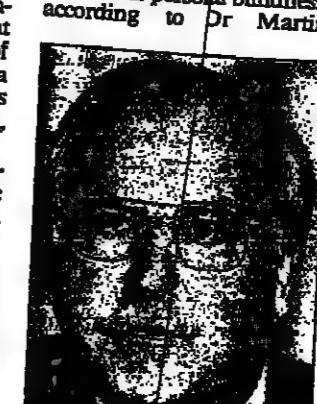
Israel's Jewish Agency, the quasi-governmental immigration organisation, reported yesterday that the number of West European Jews planning to immigrate to Israel has risen sharply in the past few weeks, particularly from Germany.

A poll released yesterday showed that most Germans would accept a temporary suspension of democratic freedoms to stop right-wing or left-wing extremism. In the poll by the respected Wickett Institute, 77 per cent of those queried would approve a kind of temporary state of emergency.

A separate survey, however, found about a quarter of Germans supporting radical right-wing slogans like "foreigners out".

Political analysts said Herr Kohl, who appeared on television within hours of the firebombing in Mönchberg to condemn the racist violence, seemed not to have grasped the magnitude of the problem.

Herr Kohl, who remains in the Bundestag yesterday, lumping violence from both the left and the right together, only highlighted his personal blindness according to Dr Martin



Kohl accused of failing to see extent of racism

Mantiza at 8pm's Society for Foreign Affairs. "I'm sorry to say that the chancellor is still showing an historical naivete and is unable to make any differences between left and right-wing violence," he said.

Analysts say the chancellor is beholden to a conservative inner circle of Christian Democratic advisers. They see tying the violence to public discontent with the influx of refugees and asylum seekers as a way of amending Germany's existing liberal asylum laws.

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Pakistan's fearful masters overreact to Bhutto's fading magic



Sharif: unnecessarily severe security tactics

BENAZIR Bhutto, the Pakistani opposition leader and former prime minister, leaves Lahore by train today in the next stage of a seemingly futile attempt to unseat the government. Though cheered by hundreds at railway stations across the country, the public response was a far cry from the days when the Bhutto name was intoxicating.

She has accused the police of strong-arm tactics to keep her supporters away. While that has been true, she has failed demonstrably to rouse people sufficiently to have any chance of ousting Mian Nawaz Sharif, the prime minister. She has, though, given him a good shaking.

Even his violent suppression of her supporters, with thousands imprisoned and tear-

gassed into submission, has not created a backlash. That is unusual. People have seemed weary of power politics and unresponsive to Miss Bhutto's attempts to mobilise her greatest weapon, street power.

Some of her own advisers believe her timing is wrong.

Perhaps she wanted Bill Clinton, the American president-elect, whom she regards as an ally, to take notice. Or she may have been raising her profile prior to an expected court ruling that she is unfit for public office and should be barred.

Mr Sharif misjudged the public mood and unnecessarily mobilised a huge security operation to stop Miss Bhutto leading a march from the Punjab city of Rawalpindi to neighbouring Islamabad, the

federal capital. He justified the move by conjuring up images of violent mob taking over the parliament buildings. But it was a humiliating experience for a country attempting to cast off its autocratic history. Islamabad had never seen the like, not even during military rule.

Aside from the city's 5,000-man police force, Mr Sharif summoned 5,500 men from the Punjab Constabulary, 4,000 paramilitary forces from the Frontier Constabulary and two army brigades. Barbed wire, sandbag bunkers, road blocks, tear gas and riot gear were brought in. Miss Bhutto's home was ringed with wire and surrounded by riot police in an attempt to stop her getting out.

It made a mockery of the country's pretences to democracy. The saving grace was that, apart from committing two brigades, the army was not deployed.

The generals, who have run Pakistan for 24 of its 45 years of existence, are doubtless disgusted that the politicians are again up to their old antics after two years of comparative calm. But General Asif Nawaz, the army chief of staff, seems determined to stay out of politics unless the system starts to collapse, as well it might eventually if Miss Bhutto keeps posting.

The generals are unimpressed by Mr Sharif, whose administration is at least as corrupt as Miss Bhutto's was. Democracy in Pakistan is extremely fragile, which is why

matters urged Miss Bhutto to call off her "long march" in case it lead to a collapse of law and order and military intervention. She refused.

That doubtless emboldened Mr Sharif into taking draconian security steps. The crackdown would have impressed earlier military dictatorships for its ferocity. Miss Bhutto was banned from the entire Punjab (later rescinded to just Islamabad and Rawalpindi) and from the North West Frontier Province for 30 days. Supporters who tried to protest were bundled into the back of police lorries and taken to jail.

Thousands are still held all over the country, leaving the four-year-old democracy weakened. The overkill gave the impression of a govern-

ment on the run. Had Miss Bhutto been given a free rein she might have been humiliated by a poor turnout.

As it was, the tear gas and barbed wire gave her a domestic propaganda victory, although she has sullied her political name internationally by threatening mob power against a democratically elected government.

Her week-long anti-government campaign took a day's rest in Lahore, the Punjab provincial capital, yesterday. She plans to travel today to the outskirts of Rawalpindi, goading the security forces who have established another formidable presence to ensure that she does not breach the ban on entering the city limits. □ Islamabad: Six people were hanged for murder in Lahore yesterday, bringing the number of executions this month to 17, said a Kot Lakhpat prison official. He said the execution of a seventh man was deferred for legal reasons.

Eleven people were hanged in prisons across Punjab on November 15 and six others won reprieves through agreements with the families of their murder victims. Islamic laws permit the relatives of the deceased to pardon the condemned person or to receive blood money as compensation. Miss Bhutto decided when she took office in 1988 to stop executions and commuted the sentences of many prisoners on death row to life imprisonment. Capital punishment was reintroduced in April by Mr Sharif to try to stem rising violence. (Reuters)

Gun attack mars new hopes of peace talks by ANC and Inkatha

FROM MICHAEL HAMPTON IN JOHANNESBURG

WHILE the announcement yesterday of a possible summit between Nelson Mandela and Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi raised hopes for peace in South Africa, violence flared again in Soweto when at least 36 people were injured by a group of men who opened fire on commuters before fleeing in a minibus. Six people have been admitted to hospital in a critical condition.

Colonel Tienie Halgyn, the police spokesman, said the gunmen boarded a train at Miamankuzi station shortly after dawn. They attacked commuters with "firearms, pangas (machetes), sharp instruments and stones" before fleeing in a minibus. Security guards at the Miamankuzi station fired shots in an attempt to ward off the attackers, but made no arrests.

Hundreds of people have

been killed or injured in attacks on Johannesburg commuter trains, a spillover from township wars which have mainly pitted supporters of the ANC against Inkatha.

In the past week, police have stopped 30 Soweto trains at random and searched 200,000 commuters in a renewed effort to stop the violence.

In the Johannesburg suburb of Sandton a meeting of representatives of all 19 signatories to last year's national peace accord gave themselves a standing ovation after a meeting where the ANC and Inkatha agreed that their leaders, Mr Mandela and Chief Buthelezi, should meet to talk of peace.

Delicate shuttle diplomacy by John Hall, a prominent businessman who chairs the committee established by the accord, finally bore fruit at the meeting. He has spent much time commuting between Chief Buthelezi in Umlazi, the KwaZulu capital, and Mr Mandela, trying to iron out their differences, and yesterday he announced that the two leaders would hold a "bilateral meeting as soon as possible".

Thabo Mbeki, a senior member of the ANC executive, told the conference that a multiparty meeting would also be on the agenda of the two leaders. This addresses one of Chief Buthelezi's key complaints that the future of the country must not be settled by bilateral meetings between the major players, but in a broader forum.

Frank Mdala, the national chairman of Inkatha, described the discussions as "thorough, practical and held without rancour", and hoped for a speedy resumption of discussions after each side had reported back.

In Durban, the ANC completed a three-day meeting of its national executive, after which Mr Mandela announced that a channel would be set up between the two groups to discuss the issues that have been preventing a meeting. Mr Mandela had drawn up a list of preconditions two days ago, which virtually amounted to an unconditional surrender by Chief Buthelezi of positions he had held since the meeting be-



Preventive action: a policeman with a shotgun forces his way onto a train carrying ANC militants in the Katlehong township on the outskirts of Johannesburg in an attempt to curb inter-faction violence, but 36 were wounded yesterday, six seriously, in another train attack

Dissident is released on probation

Peking: Bao Zumin, 55, a prominent dissident imprisoned for five years in 1989 for plotting to overthrow the Chinese government, was released yesterday "on probation", more than 18 months early. (Catherine Sampson writes).

Mr Bao, a philosopher, is the first Tiananmen Square pro-democracy demonstrator to be freed before the end of his sentence. There is speculation that this may be followed by the release of others who are sick or who have "repented" sufficiently.

Bones found

Bangkok: The skeletons of seven Asian slaves who helped to build the infamous "Death Railway" for the Japanese during the second world war have been discovered during the excavation of a car park in Kanchanaburi, 75 miles northwest of Bangkok. (Reuters)

Sale withdrawn

Athens: The Christina, the legendary palatial yacht belonging to the late Greek shipping tycoon Aristotle Onassis, has been withdrawn from sale for the second time, due to a lack of interest. The Greek government had hoped the yacht would fetch £3 million.

Mediator dies

Miami: Rafael Garcia Herrenos, the Colombian priest who won international fame last year and was nominated for the Nobel peace prize when he acted as mediator in the surrender of Pablo Escobar, the cocaine baron, has died in Bogota aged 85.

Malta devalues

Valletta: Malta has devalued its lira by 10 per cent against all foreign currencies with immediate effect in an effort to keep its exports and tourism competitive. John Dalli, the minister of finance, told the parliament in a budget debate. (Reuters)

Danger flight

Tokyo: A 52-year-old Japanese man is making a dangerous and unauthorised solo attempt to cross the Pacific from Japan to the United States in a box hanging from 26 helium-filled balloons, in defiance of transport ministry objections. (Reuters)

Clinton's Senate gamble fails

Victory in Georgia cheers Republicans

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

IN A setback that has taken some of the lustre off the Democratic election victory, Wyche Fowler, the Democratic senator, has been narrowly defeated in a Senate run-off in Georgia by Paul Coverdell, the Republican challenger and former Peace Corps director.

During its meeting the ANC executive also endorsed the strategy document approved by the national working committee last week. The document envisages a power-sharing government of national unity, even after elections for a transitional government have been held.

Cyril Ramaphosa, the ANC general secretary, said at the end of the meeting that his organisation would do all in their power to ensure that democratic elections took place in South Africa within the next nine to 12 months. "It is possible to achieve this by next year," he said.

Death threat: Eugene Terre Blanche, head of the Afrikaner Resistance Movement, told hundreds of supporters in Durban that, if the ANC tries to confiscate white farmland in the future, Mr Mandela would be killed. (AP)

Fowler in Georgia on Monday. Yesterday Republicans were hailing Mr Coverdell's victory as a blow to the incoming administration.

The pro-Republican Washington Times claimed that the Georgia election had caused "Bill Clinton to flunk a test of his own political co-tails".

Mr Clinton made a personal appeal to Georgians to re-elect Mr Fowler to help "break this gridlock in Washington", and their refusal to do so is being seen by Republicans as an indication that, while they lost the presidential race, their message is still popular.

Mr Fowler was probably defeated as much by voter apathy and the weather as by a resurgence of Republican support, after a battle which hinged on which side could entice, persuade or cajole more of the election-weary Georgia voters to go to the polls. The vote on Tuesday

was about one-third of the turnout for the presidential election three weeks ago, thanks to a combination of driving rain, "election burnout" and the negative tone of both campaigns.

The Clinton camp denied that the result reflected badly on the president-elect and George Stephanopoulos, the communications director, defended Mr Clinton's decision to support an uncertain and ultimately losing candidate.

"It sent an important signal," Mr Stephanopoulos said. "If people fight for Clinton, he will fight for them."

James Carville, who orchestrated Mr Clinton's successful presidential campaign, said: "I think that the risk was to do nothing. If you're going to be president, you've got to fight for something."

Mr Coverdell said his victory was the work of supporters "who stepped forward in

this election season and said: 'We want change, we want common sense, we want someone in Washington who came from the workplace'."

Mr Coverdell, who was appointed by President Bush to run the Peace Corps in 1989, successfully mobilised Republican support in the suburbs of Georgia, while Mr Fowler's traditional Democratic supporters in urban areas proved harder to muster.

A Fowler victory would have enabled the Democrats to add an important extra seat to their majority in the Senate. Democratic Kent Conrad is almost certain to take the place of the late senator, Quentin Burdick, in North Dakota on December 4; this would leave the Democrats with the 57-43 majority they had had for the past two years.

Leading article, page 17

New group challenges Miyazawa

FROM JOANNA PITTMAN IN TOKYO

KENICHI Ohmae, Japan's most famous business and management pundit, yesterday launched a new political pressure group designed to trigger a "citizen's revolution" and to end the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's (LDP) 40-year grip on national politics.

Named Heisei Ishin no Kai (Reform of Heisei Group) after the current Heisei era, Mr Ohmae's grassroots organisation hopes to attract a million individual members. Using their 10,000-yen (£50) subscriptions, Mr Ohmae hopes to raise enough money to endorse 50 enlightened MPs from any of the existing parties. "They will eventually form their own party to change this country in the 21st century," he said.

"The current LDP and opposition socialist party axis is obsolete. Existing parties have completed their role of building up Japan since the war. Unfortunately Japan still has a political system which is suitable for a developing country. We are offering a third, middle-of-the-road choice that will serve the interests of the people rather than the special interests of the current administration," he said.

Unlike Vietnam and Thailand, where the sex scene is free-wheeling, Cambodia, even after years of war and Khmer Rouge rule, is still a deeply conservative society.

However, it is not only in matters of drinking and sex that dismay has been provoked. There is also the matter of inflation. The prices of staples like beef, pork and rice have in some cases risen 500 per cent in the past few months. The value of the riel, 600 to the dollar six months ago, is now 2,050 to the dollar.

The UN itself claims its presence has not had such a negative effect on inflation. And Untac has done much good: 181,000 refugees have been repatriated in the past few months, and more than a million voters have been registered for next year's UN-supervised elections.

Few people expect Reform of Heisei to pull off any significant challenge to the well-entrenched LDP, led by Kiichi Miyazawa, the prime minister. The party has retained power thanks to financial support from big business. But the new group could act as a focus of discontent for younger politicians within the LDP who are prevented from introducing true reforms by their elders.

Sex and inflation end the UN honeymoon in Cambodia

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PHNOM PENH

WHEN they first came to Cambodia a year ago, United Nations soldiers were welcomed as liberators. Dozens of Cambodians gathered outside the UN compounds just to gaze at them. "I want to look and look until I have my fill," a man holding his son in his arms said outside an Australian billet.

True or not, the streets of Phnom Penh, which has a population of one million, are packed with white-painted UN four-wheel drive vehicles, each of which seems to have only one passenger, usually a UN bureaucrat or soldier. In rural areas, UN troops are busy, but hundreds of large off-duty young men in T-shirts and shorts in the capital have time on their hands.

Apart from their salaries, the 22,000 UN personnel are paid subsistence allowances of \$148 a day, so soldiers, often unsophisticated young men from such countries as Poland and Bulgaria, have been enduring hardships in the field, had a right to a few beers and to chase after "young beautiful beings of the opposite sex". In the wake of the predictable outcry, Untac has appointed a community relations officer, a woman, to handle public complaints.

In an interview yesterday, Mr Akashi admitted that some UN troops had been sent home, but defended his speech. "At the time I had to defend our soldiers. The behaviour of a very small minority should not colour people's

perception of Untac as a whole." But much damage has already been done.

The World Health Organisation here has reported that 75 per cent of people giving blood in the capital are infected with HIV. Whether or not UN soldiers have anything to do with that is debatable, but they have been hurriedly issued with condoms and told not to park their UN vehicles outside brothels.

Part of the problem stems from the fact that the UN operation is bogged down through the unwillingness of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge to participate in the peace process. As a result, thousands of UN troops in Phnom Penh are idle.

Soldiers coming from a country like Bulgaria, which has not participated in a UN operation before and where the people are very poor, are vulnerable here," one diplomat said. But more sophisticated Western troops are not altogether innocent. Two

British soldiers have already been repatriated, one of them for drunken brawling. In their open letter to Mr Akashi, the NGOs said that, while foreign women could complain, Cambodians felt intimidated by the UN troops, who they originally thought had come to protect them from the warring factions here. "They don't know where to seek help if sexual favours are demanded," one



Akashi: defended troops' carousing

foreign relief agency representative said.

Unlike Vietnam and Thailand, where the sex scene is free-wheeling, Cambodia, even after years of war and Khmer Rouge rule, is still a deeply conservative society.

However, it is not only in matters of drinking and sex that dismay has been provoked. There is also the matter of inflation. The prices of staples like beef, pork and rice have in some cases risen 500 per cent in the past few months. The value of the riel, 600 to the dollar six months ago, is now 2,050 to the dollar.

The UN itself claims its presence has not had such a negative effect on inflation. And Untac has done much good: 181,000 refugees have been repatriated in the past few months, and more than a million voters have been registered for next year's UN-supervised elections.

But the honeymoon between Cambodians and the UN is over, at least in this capital.

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14 MODERN TIMES

THE TIMES THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26 1992

Computerisation and competition are replacing the human — some would say inhuman — face of high street banking. Paul Barker reports

Trouble down at the bank

When Maureen Jameson started work as a bank clerk, "it was like God was in his office. The managers all looked like your father. They still came to work in bowler hats and pinstripes."

That was only 30 years ago. Already it seems like something out of John Galsworthy. In the mornings, Mrs Jameson's first job was to clean pens, change the ink, put out clean blotters. "When people sat waiting to see the manager, they talked in whispers." It was like chapel.

Bank managers used to put the fear of God into people. His financial vicar in the high street. Now they are at the receiving end. "There is a great deal of fear, fear of the unknown," says Bryan Turton, a Manchester bank manager, on secondment to the Banking, Insurance and Finance Union. At golf clubs, on weekdays, you can't move for them. Once, banks paid subscriptions so that managers could, in Mr Turton's words, "associate with solicitors, businessmen and people like that". Now, the golf is how they fill out their days.

This week, Barclays and the Royal Bank of Scotland both announced plans for further staff cuts. The erosion has gone on relentlessly since boom turned to slump. In 1990, for example, Barclays had 84,500 clerks and managers. Now it has 75,000. A further 15,000 were due to go by 1995. This week the cut-back was increased, to 18,000.

The classic bank manager, in many people's minds, is Arthur Lowe's Captain Mainwaring, from *Dad's Army*, a man with a face (and body) like a potato, fusing with his glasses, edgy about his social position.

One of the few bank managers in English literature is Roland Gwatin, in Anthony Powell's semi-autobiographical novel-sequence *A Dance to the Music of Time*.

For the paperback of *The Valley of Bones*, the novel in which Gwatin first appears, the cartoonist Marc Bové drew a cover portrait of him. He is a thinner, taller version of Mainwaring, captain's swagger stick under his arm, small moustache, the neb of his officer's cap barely hiding a worried frown. We are in the



Pinstripe soldiers: Arthur Lowe (left), the bank manager turned Home Guard, and John LeMesurier in *Dad's Army*

presence of a stereotype. Gwatin was, says Nicholas Jenkins (Powell's alter ego, as an overage phoney war second lieutenant), "something of a martinet, a trifle unapproachable to his subordinates ... above all, a man dedicated to duty". In the company

office, Gwatin reproduced bank manager routine. As messages came in, he marked each item with the mark in the ticked letters of the company's rubber stamp, himself initialing the centre of its circular mauve impression ... often wryly smiling as he

reminded: "It becomes a habit." Anything Gwatin thought confidential went into a large cashbox, of which he kept the key, and stowed in a green steel cupboard, also locked. There was a faint but distinct sense of absolute power.

But the bank manager's power base is crumbling. From 2,900 branches in the early 1980s, Barclays today has 2,290. It will be down to 1,900 in 1995. With cash dispensers now installed in virtually every shopping mall, another routine task of a high street bank has dwindled. In 1988, Barclays recruited 12,000 new staff. Last year it took on 1,500. One thing is unchanged, though: only 175 were graduates.

Like thousands of others, Mrs Jameson — at 46 one of the very rare women branch managers — came in after O-levels. "I really wanted to join the police. I passed the exam, but they said to wait till I was 18. So I went to the bank. It seemed a nice job. You dealt with the public."

The old-style bank manager often rose to power through the tradition of Buggin's turn. "As an assistant manager," says Barry Ingham, who retired early from running a Liverpool bank, "you could work out how many years it would be before you made it."

Once arrived, however, he had some real autonomy. He was supposed to cultivate the right people, and bring their business in. But there was no cold wind of competition. "We didn't worry whether we made a profit," Mrs Jameson recalls. "We just assumed we did."

Banks did not do mort-

gages. Building societies did not do personal loans. Local managers politely referred customers across the road. "In my early days," says Alan Hampson, laid off last year from the Royal Bank of Scotland after 34 years' service at the age of 51, "if a manager sold an insurance policy, he kept the commission himself. I knew one man who never touched his bank salary."

Meanwhile,

the manager

sang in the local choir, was Hon. Treasurer of the cricket club, and perhaps joined the police inspector and the bigger shopkeepers in the mysteries of the Masonic lodge.

Like many men controlling

everal power-zones, managers deluded themselves about how other people saw them. In 1985, Gallup asked respondents which groups they trusted. Bank managers polled well down the list, below solicitors, and level-paging with teachers (Doctors were easily top). Estate agents and MPs came bottom. But at least, if a man running a small business went in to the local manager, he felt he was talking to someone who could take a decision. This is less and less true.

Change was pre-

cipitated by the

Financial Services

Act 1986. The high street bank became a kind of shop, not a kind of chapel. Even the architecture, the social geography, changed. Once, 80 per cent of floor space was for staff, 20 per cent for customers. Now they are making it open-plan, which is "customer-friendly". In Mr Hampson's words, "It became sell, sell, sell."

The major banks all signed up as distributors for insurance companies," says Jeremy Mitchell, the consumer policy consultant and a former director of the National Consumer Council. "It changed the manager's status. You should never trust a bank manager now to give you the best advice on insurance. He can only push the products of one company."

"Banks often present themselves, especially in advertising, as if the old ethos of closeness of the community still held true. The bank manager is shown walking down the high street, saying, 'Hello, Mrs Jones.' This is increasingly, non-sense. There is no such consumer-contact."

The new-style manager is a salesman. "All the talk is of cost-containment," Mr Turton says. "Once it took 70p to bring in every £1 of business. It's being driven down towards 60p."

At her TSB branch in Denton, Greater Manchester, Mrs Jameson has sales meetings weekly, and a daily review. "It's all about the organisation and motivation of a sales team," she says. "Go

onwards."

"Everything changes," she says. "Once the job was all

about adding up columns of figures and ruling lines across pages. The computers do that now. We're a retail outlet, not a temple of doom and gloom. I think it's progress."

Coke, a burning issue

The real thing
continues to
make the news



Protest: French farmers burn a Coke machine

When General Norman Schwarzkopf accepted the Iraqi surrender at the end of the Gulf war, a can of Diet Pepsi sat next to him on the table, photographed for all the world to see. As one Coca-Cola executive was reported as saying at the time: "It just didn't look right. It was our place to be on that table. Our right. We are the symbol of America. We represent what America is. We are success in action. Ours is the image of international co-operation, a way of life."

After some years in the cold, the world's most popular soft drink has finally re-emerged

this week as the world's most

popular symbol of American culture. French farmers chose

Coca-Cola, 106 years-old this

year, as the focus of their

protest against what they consider to be an American-dominated trade deal with the EC, agreed last Friday. On Monday they burnt rubber tyres outside a Coca-Cola plant in the southern Paris suburb of Grigny. A mob set fire to a Coca vending machine at another plant in Besançon. Not since the accusations of Third World "Coca-colaism" in the 1960s has the multinational company been under such attack.

But have the farmers got it

right? Does Coca-Cola really

represent America to the rest

of the world? What of Mac-

Donald's? What of the Stars

and Stripes? Peter Stokes, the

external affairs director of Coca-Cola UK, is unmoved.

"We have a demonstrable

commitment to each of the

185 countries we operate in.

We are very much local in the

sense that our operations are

locally run," he says. "If any-

one wants to see us in another

way, on that I can't comment."

In Barcelona this year,

Coca-Cola plastered the Olympic village with signs saying:

"Drink Coca-Cola" as part of

its regular Olympic million

dollar sponsorship. Only the

signs were in Catalan. Even

though few visiting athletes

were able to understand them,

they tickled the locals' fancy.

"A lot of people here would

rather see a Coke sign than a

Spanish flag," said kiosk owner Josep Guerri, in *The Times*.

So Coke can get it right.

Recent attempts to

weave Coke into non-

American cultures have

brought accusations of cultural

imperialism. Last August,

Coca-Cola ran a television

advertisement in Italy showing

the columns of the Parthenon

in Athens shaped like a

Coke bottle, under the caption:

"A classic drink against thirst". Outraged, the Greek

culture minister Melina

Mercouri said: "It is a vana-

lism and an insult to the classic

masterpiece." Coca-Cola apolo-

gised to Greece and withdrew the ad.

The real point is that Coca-Cola is not American, but international. Like many multinationals, the more it sells abroad, the more it is owned abroad, so much so

that "abroad" becomes rather

meaningless. In France, Coca-Cola is almost 100 per cent locally produced, except, of course, for that secret magic ingredient, which is imported from the United States.

JAMES LANDALE

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

School Examination Results

For the first time the Government has published tables showing the public examination results for all maintained secondary schools in England, as promised in the Parent's Charter.

The tables give the results for each school, together with the local and national averages and also include brief details about the type of school listed. Information for independent schools is given if they have chosen to be included.

The results have been published to give parents information on the quality of education provided and the standards achieved in our schools.

Local Education Authority Code numbers	DONCASTER 371
AVON 901	DORSET 912
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BARNET 302	DURHAM 913
BARNES 370	EALING 915
BEDFORDSHIRE 902	EAST SUSSEX 914
BERKSHIRE 903	ENFIELD 308
BEXLEY 303	ESSEX 915
BIRMINGHAM 330	GATESHEAD 390
BOLTON 350	GLoucestershire 916
BRADFORD 380	GREENWICH 203
BRENT 304	HARROW 310
BROMLEY 305	HAVERING 311
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE 904	HEREFORD & WORCESTER 918
BURY 351	HERTFORDSHIRE 919
CALDERDALE 381	HILLINGDON 312
CAMBRIDGESHIRE 905	HOUNSLAW 313
CAMDEN 202	ISLE OF WIGHT 921
CHESTER 906	ISLINGTON 206
CORP OF LONDON (combined with Westminster)	KENSINGTON & CHELSEA 207
CLEVELAND 907	KENT 922
CORNWALL 908	KINGSTON UPON THAMES 314
COVENTRY 331	LANCASHIRE 923
CROYDON 306	LEEDS 383
CUMBRIA 909	LEICESTERSHIRE 924
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Copies of the booklet are also available at main public libraries and can be inspected at all maintained schools other than infant and nursery.	LIVERPOOL 341
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_____	RICHMOND UPON THAMES 318
_____	ROCHDALE 354
_____	ROTHMERSHAM 372
_____	ST HELENS 342
_____	SALFORD 355
_____	SANDWELL 333
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Foot and heart disease

THE National Trust is renovating the Norfolk tomb of the second Earl of Buckinghamshire who had, at various times, been ambassador to St Petersburg and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Lord Buckinghamshire met an unfortunate end 200 years ago when, aged 70, he plunged his gouty foot into cold water in an attempt to relieve the pain. He promptly died, a death always attributed by historians to gout.

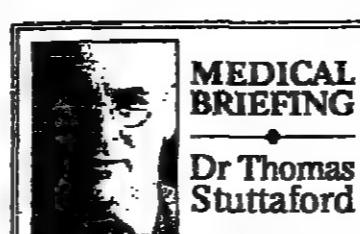
Gout is associated with coronary heart disease in men but not, surprisingly, in women, and the sudden immersion of a limb into cold water is known to be almost as good a way as the treadmill, or exercise bicycle, of demonstrating coronary artery disease. Lord Buckinghamshire, in fact, died of a heart attack, and only indirectly of gout.

In laryngitis the mucosa of the larynx and the laryngeal cords are red and swollen, so that the cords do not vibrate as they should, hence the change in voice quality. It is hard work speaking with a hoarse voice, and the tiny muscles which are attached to the now-heavy laryngeal cords soon tire, so that the more the patient has to speak the worse the voice becomes.

she would acquire a considerable resistance to infection. But stress, strain and unhappiness such as would be generated by an "annus horribilis" together with the Windsor damp would make any patient more vulnerable to infection.

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Gout is very rare in men before puberty, or women before the menopause. The first attack of gout in men — it is eight times more common in men than women — usually occurs between the ages of 30 and 60 and is most often confined to one joint. In 70 per cent of



cases the big toe joint. The frequency with which the big toe joint is initially attacked makes it easy to overlook the diagnosis when it occurs in other joints, but any joint, even the neck or pelvic joints, can be affected, and in particular the ankles, knees, wrists or elbows.

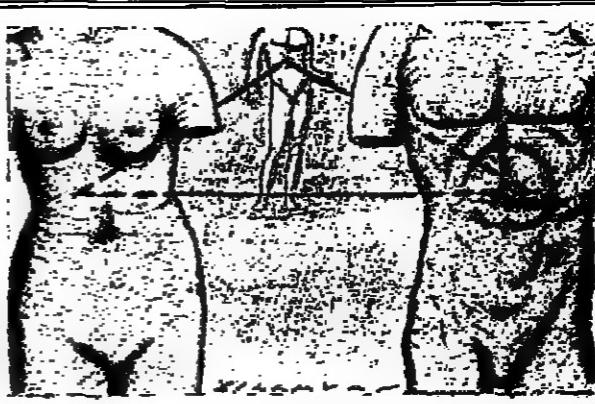
Many people with minor attacks of gout may notice only some transitory pain in the small joints of their hands and feet; gout has a tendency to attack joints already damaged by some other cause. Patients may have had raised serum uric acid blood levels (the marker for gout) for many years before developing joint pains. When the joints are involved they become hot and swollen and the acute condition may take up to a few weeks to get better. In time the repeated attacks are followed by joint damage and by persistent arthritis.

Gout is now a largely preventable

disease. Once the acute symptoms have been treated with either colchicine, which is potentially toxic, or an anti-rheumatic drug, and the acute attack has been dealt with, then long-term prophylactic treatment with allopurinol, which lowers the blood uric acid levels, can be started. Initially allopurinol may precipitate an acute attack so it is as well to combine it for a month or two with an anti-rheumatic drug.

Twenty per cent of patients with gout develop kidney stones, while kidney disease and hypertension are frequent complications of the untreated disease. There is an association with both diseases, and as in Lord Buckinghamshire's case, heart disease. Obesity and heavy drinking may precipitate attacks in susceptible people, particularly if the drinking follows a period of starvation. Nothing could be more unwise than for a man with a tendency to gout to go without lunch, and then to have a few drinks on the way home.

In the past, heavy drinkers — and drunk for Britain in the embassies of the world — had an additional hazard. Wine stored in old-fashioned wine bottles became contaminated by lead, and lead poisoning from wine was a frequent cause of gout in earlier centuries.



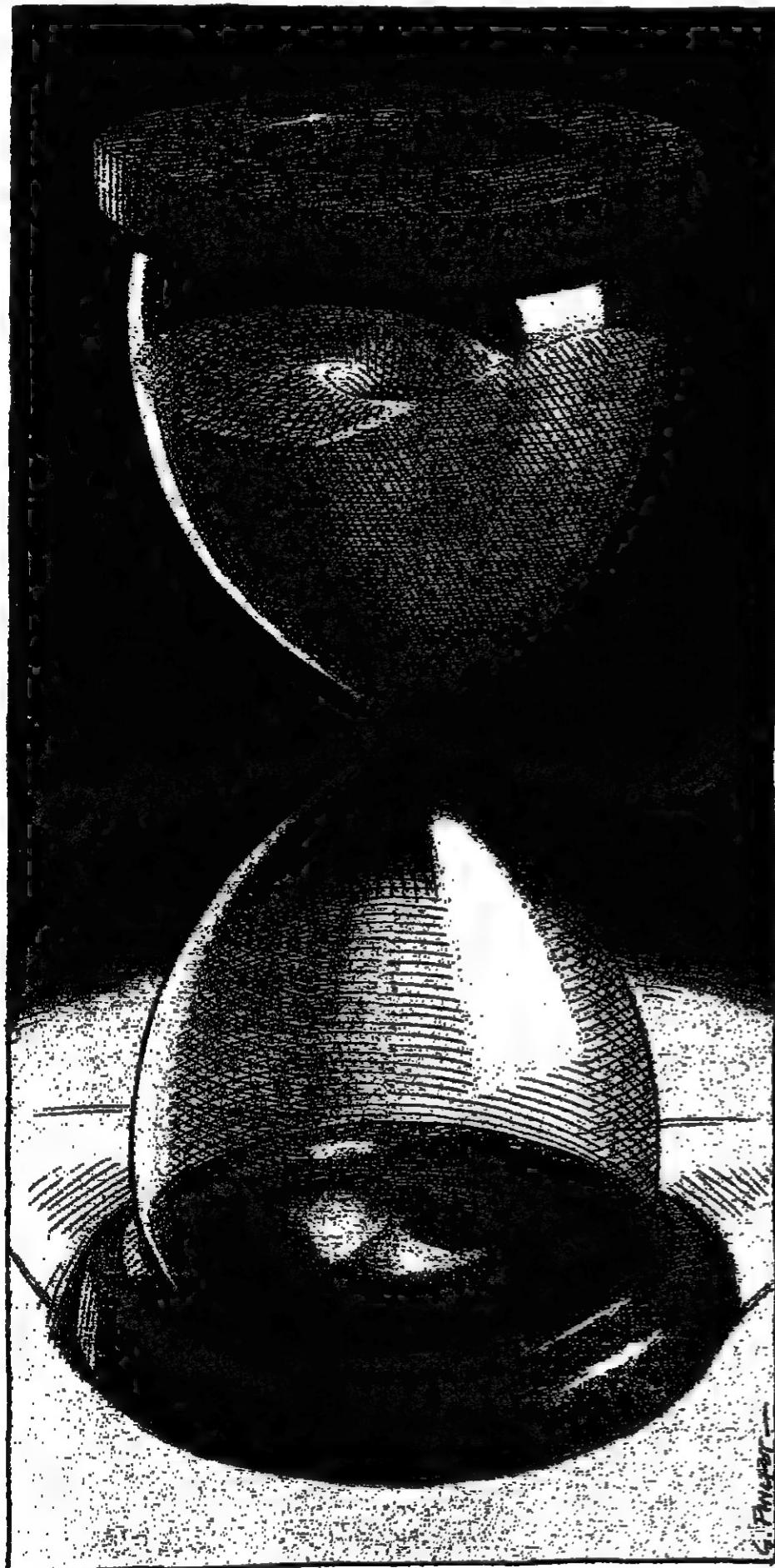
Dividing to multiply

NATURE is generous with its provision of essential organs: men reproduce without trouble with one testis; people live unimpaired with one kidney and can damage a large portion of their liver without going into liver failure. The liver, which had been flown down from Glasgow, was divided according to the size of the recipients: a girl aged three-and-a-half and a man in his twenties. The first portion was implanted into the child, the second taken in a cool-box to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. If all goes well it will be the first entirely successful split-liver transplant in Britain. The patients should later have a normal-sized, normal functioning, if not normal shaped, liver.

Hoarse in Guildhall

THE Queen struggled with her voice at Guildhall but it sounded as if it might degenerate beyond hoarseness and either lapse into a near-soundless whisper (aphonia) or produce the unnatural squeaks of an adolescent. The Queen had laryngitis, in her case due to a combination of upper respiratory tract infection and the effects of the inhalation of the irritant, smoke-laden, Windsor air. It would be expected that the Queen, like a doctor, would see so many people that

Liz Gill reports on the controversy surrounding 'do it yourself' abortion, an American idea that British doctors say should not be welcomed here



The spectre of the backstreet abortionist has rightly haunted generations of women. But what if a woman could terminate an unwanted pregnancy in the comfort of her own bedroom?

What if the abortionist were not the hag with the knitting needle, but a group of skilled and supportive friends? Would that be an enlightened new way to solve an age-old problem?

About 2,000 American women believe so: they are members of self-help groups who practice the technique of menstrual extraction on each other (see box below).

This week *A Woman's Book of Choices*, by Rebecca Chalker and Carol Downer, which details the theory and practice of the technique, is published in this country. The book is geared to the American situation, but the procedure has worldwide application. It is relevant wherever women need and cannot get abortions," Ms Chalker says.

"Legality is not the same as accessibility. The situation is already difficult in States, and it is going to get more difficult. Gynaecologists here have really bailed out. Abortion is not profitable, and it brings a lot of harassment."

Ms Chalker, an abortion counsellor and health writer, believes that menstrual extraction, which suctions out the contents of the uterus, is both safe and effective. "But it does need skill and training. The way it usually happens is that a group studies the subject in depth — you need to know about anatomy, examination and the sterilisation of equipment — and then find someone to teach them the technique. Some doctors and nurses are prepared to pass on their knowledge. The practitioner needs an apprenticeship of six months to a year, with guidance and supervision."

Doctors learn menstrual extraction as part of specialist gynaecological training. The most common use of the technique is the insertion of interuterine devices — only then something is put into the womb, not drawn out — but the procedure may also be used diagnostically in dealing with, for example, menstrual problems where a sample of the endometrium is needed.

Ms Chalker claims that this is not "incredibly complicated stuff. We are not talking about heart surgery. This is something similar in difficulty to, say, self-catherisation which

Is this a case of self-help gone too far?

is often taught to people, bladders are not working."

Extraction, she says, is only appropriate from around the time a period is due, to a couple of weeks after. "A lot of women know they have had unprotected intercourse or there might have been a contraceptive failure. It is also possible to use a pregnancy test which will give a result on the day a period is due."

Some groups confine the procedure, which takes an average of half an hour and requires no drugs to themselves; others believe it is a service they should offer to outsiders in need. To date its use has not prompted any legal action. Women who do menstrual extraction believe it is legal because they're not attempting a medical diagnosis of pregnancy," Ms Chalker says. "They are using it physically or just wanting to get their period. They maintain it is a home healthcare procedure which they have a right to employ."

The authors insist their book is not an abortion handbook. It does, however, contain enough detail for a reader to work out the technique and assemble the necessary equipment. "We felt we had to put in the detail so that women could make informed choices but this is in no way a DIY manual. All the groups we know have had to seek out someone to demonstrate what you do."

"One could not perform it on one's self anyway, partly because of the position of the uterus and partly because one cannot get hold of the equipment overnight. Desperate women want an abortion yesterday. They are the ones who will go to the back street abortionists."

British experts appear unconvinced of the merits of menstrual extraction. Dr Fleur Fisher, the head of ethics,

science and information at the British Medical Association, points out that its practice would be illegal in this country: only doctors are allowed to perform abortions. She thinks it is still a backward step even in the legally grey area of using it when a pregnancy has not been confirmed.

"What you're asking women to do is put each other at risk. Introducing anything into the

"I understand women want to take control of their bodies, but this is an over-reaction, this is fetishising control"

uterus is very hazardous. There has to be a very high degree of asepsis to avoid infection. Septicaemia can be fatal. There is also the danger of persistent low-grade infection which might not even be noticeable, but which can lead to tubal damage and infertility.

"The womb becomes soft in pregnancy and it is possible to puncture it. This is less likely with a cannula [the flexible thin plastic tube used in extraction], but it is still a possibility."

Dr Fisher, who had a friend who died after a self-induced abortion, believes women's energies would be better spent pressing for improvement in the existing facilities and the further development of medical as well as surgical solutions.

"Abortion is legal here, but it is still difficult. In many

areas to get early terminations on the health service. Of the 179,000 a year only 65,000 were done in the first nine weeks and of those only 35 per cent were NHS."

Ian Jones, the director of the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, says that unlike America the legal status of abortion in Britain is likely to be secure for the foreseeable future. "Women here have access to good care. I understand the principle of self-determination and I can see merit in women having the power to make decisions for themselves but they largely have that power within the law already. I don't think we need recourse to self-help groups."

The other thing that concerns me is that various studies have shown that complications or side effects are more likely when the abortion is in inexperienced hands. That difference is shown even between clinics which do them all the time and NHS hospitals which don't do so many, so it would be even more pronounced in these self-help groups. How are they going to gain that wide experience?"

Ann Furedi, the assistant director of the Birth Control Trust, an information resource centre, says: "I don't think menstrual extraction is a positive thing at all. At best it's pretty useless. This is not reclaiming our bodies. I don't think a significant proportion of women want to take abortion into their own hands any more than they want to drill their own teeth. What they want is to go and see someone medically qualified in whom they have confidence."

"One of the reasons menstrual extraction has not taken off as a method of abortion generally is that it has to be done early when it is possible to induce bleeding but miss the pregnancy. It is hard before six weeks to be sure you have effected a complete abor-

tion. The danger would be that women think they are no longer pregnant when in fact they still are."

"But my real objection is that if people think the abortion service is under pressure what they have to do is galvanise their forces to fight for a better one. Anything that smacks of doing it ourselves is dangerous because it lets the NHS off the hook."

Joe Jordan, a spokesman for the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, says: "The procedure is pretty straightforward and safe if you are properly trained but we would have grave reservations about it being done by unskilled hands."

There may be some psychological benefits for women who fear they may be pregnant but don't know for sure. If they can convince themselves they might not really have been pregnant they might feel less guilty or distressed. But it could also have the opposite effect. At least abortion is a conscious decision. If you never know whether you were or were not pregnant you could brood about it later, especially if you have fertility problems."

For her part, Tara Kaufmann, the co-author of *Unplanned Pregnancy* and a member of the Abortion Law Reform Association's executive, does not believe any such groups exist in this country. "It's an American reaction to an American problem and I don't know anyone who thinks it's a good idea for us."

"I would like to see abortion de-medicalised to some extent. Hospitals make a bit of a meal of it at the moment, you have to see two or three doctors for instance, and there should be more done in local day care centres. I understand that women want to take control of their bodies but this is a bit of an over-reaction, this is fetishising control."

"I don't think it helps women just to have it done on spec and not to know whether they are pregnant. The procedure of abortion is not the crisis, the crisis is the unplanned pregnancy, whether confirmed or not. In my experience it is important for women to know what's going on and to make their choice. Sometimes the more real an abortion feels, the better the recovery."

• *A Woman's Book of Choices* by Rebecca Chalker and Carol Downer is published today by Four Walls Eight Windows (£9.95).

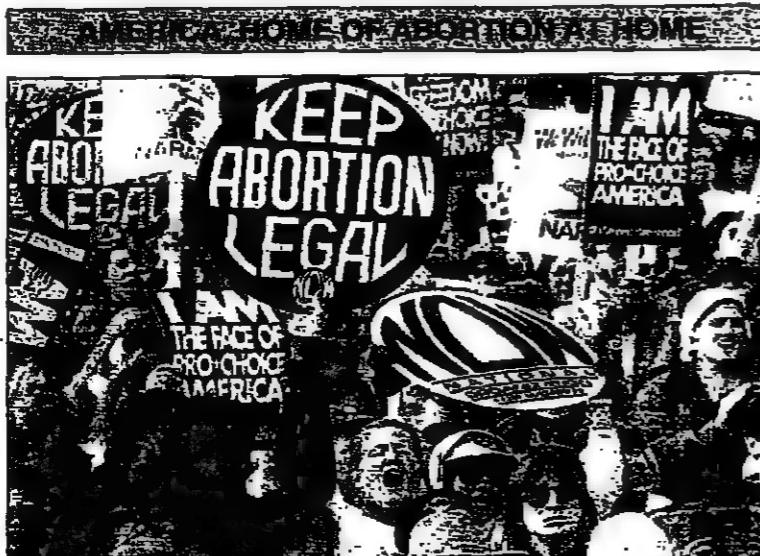
Alternative, underground abortions, which include home menstrual extraction, use of ancient herbal potions and smuggled RU486 pills are being increasingly promoted by some women's groups in America.

When Roe v Wade, the court case which protected abortion, came under threat from the right-wing of the Republican party and fundamentalist Christians in the last few years, there was a concomitant rise in self-help advice. Women toured feminist centres in all states and taught others to perform menstrual extractions with a kit made from items including a jar, plastic tubing and a large syringe.

The technique of home menstrual extraction was invented by a San Diego primary school teacher, Lorraine Rothman, in 1971. She suggested women should not try it as a do-it-yourself operation, but it should be performed by a group of women who had been trained in the method.

Despite the new Clinton administration's support of abortion rights, certain states have laws which make getting an abortion so complicated it is often easier to go outside the area for help. One Quaker women's group has arranged an "underground railroad" to transport women to states where abortion is more accessible.

Carol Downer, the founder of the Federation of Feminist Health Centres, has toured 70 women's centres nationwide explaining menstrual extraction. She is the co-author, with



But some are more legal than others: a pro-choice rally in Washington

Rebecca Chalker, of *A Woman's Book of Choices*, which was published in America in September. She says the method has been tested by more than 10,000 women since 1971, during which time there have been a dozen reported cases of infection — similar to medical abortion — but no deaths. Ms Downer says extraction, usually done within two or three weeks of missing a period, is "a safety net" and

not a first choice if medical abortion is easily available. Others advocate extraction for those who are not pregnant but wish to get rid of an inconvenient period. The upper limit for performing extraction of the contents of the uterus is eight weeks of pregnancy, and American doctors, while warning against operations carried out at home, do say they are often used in developing countries.

KATE MUIR

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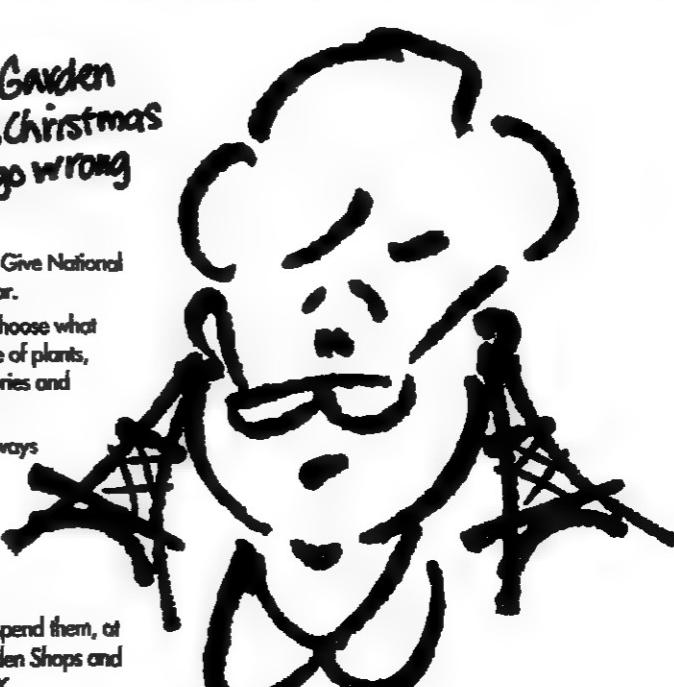
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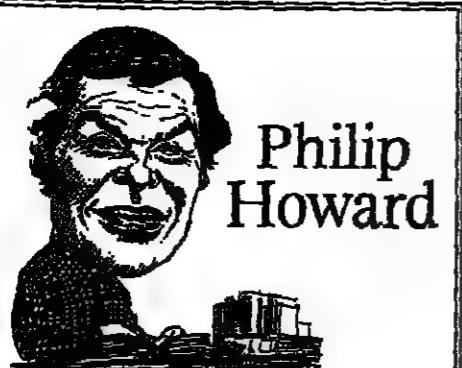
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مكتبة الأصل



Philip
Howard

■ The Queen, despite an *annus horribilis*, should get on with the business of life

Life is divided into the horrible and the miserable. *Annus horribilis* is a regal way of putting it. Private emotion expressed publicly, except by show-off enthusiasts and nutters who enjoy the public confession of sins, is best left by the shy in the obscurity of learned language, as the Queen did in her Guildhall speech. It was full of coded references. *The Sun* translated her phrase into the derotistic, "One's bum year", for those of its readers without enough Latin to work out that *Caput tuum in anno est* means "You hit the nail right on the head". Pedants could argue about Her Majesty's Latin. *Horribilis* comes from *horre*, to bristle, and hence figuratively to shudder with horror. But the more elegant Latin word would be the gerundive, *horrendus*. It is true that Cicero wrote about a *horribilis* public pestilence (referring to a politically incorrect guy). But he also used *horribilis* to mean astonishing, as in a *horribilis* or remarkable alertness.

The Queen's quotation was adapted from Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*, his early poem in bouncing quatrains referring to the year 1665-6, and dealing with English victories over the Dutch at sea, and then, for the last third, with the Great Fire of London. Dryden, who probably wrote the poem at Charlton in Wiltshire, where he lived during the plague and five years invented the phrase of his title. He was a goodish Latinist, at any rate for a Trinity (Cambridge) scholar, and I cannot find *annus mirabilis* anywhere in the ancient authorities.

The happy phrase of *annus mirabilis* was nicked at once by Evelyn, Lord Chesterfield and others, who could recognise something worth plagiarising even if it was only whispered. In the 18th century hacks started to use the converse and not at all golden Latin cliché of *annus horribilis*. It has now become a cliché of pretentious journalists who wish to flaunt their supposed scholarship, though the *Daily Mail* was anachronistic by more than two centuries to suggest that it was invented by *The Times*.

But more interesting than the Queen's Latin semantics is her common superstition. The notion that a horrible time comes measured out in tidy periods like years is deeply engrained in human nature. You can find it in the oldest proverbs in English, from "It never rains but it pours" to "If your luck goes on at this rate you may very well hope to be hanged." Bad luck traditionally comes in the magical but horrible number of three. King Claudius made the point, with more justification than most, after the killing of his prime minister, his stepson sent into exile for alarming behaviour such as stabbing prime ministers behind arras. Ophelia flipped, the public opinion polls thick and unwholesome (so what else is new?), and Laertes back from France causing trouble and calling for a general election: "When sorrows come, they come not single spies/But in battalions."

In the catalogue of human misery, some years have indeed turned out comparatively scaly. 1949 was not a lot of fun for the Establishment, with four emperors of the civilised world in turn elevated to the purple and then zapped. Their black historian was not kidding when he introduces his piece: "I approach a theme rich in disasters and horrible with battles." He knew what sells papers. Most people hardly noticed.

1966 was an *annus horribilis* for Anglo-Saxons, but pretty damned *mirabilis* if you were a Norman. Those who were around at the time speak of *la douceur de la vie* before the horrible year of 1914, after which nothing was ever the same again.

Pessimism, when you get used to it, is as agreeable as optimism. The thing to do, dear Queen, is kick the old *annus horribilis* and black dog in its superstitious tender parts, and get on with the untidy business of life.

Clarke of the course

IT IS AMAZING what you find when you clean out the attic, as Stephen Dorrell, financial secretary to the treasury, knows only too well. Dorrell has just trawled the recesses of Whitehall in a search for prime targets for privatisation and has come up with some unlikely booty.

In the equivalent of the Renoir in the state, he has discovered that the government owns three of Britain's best known racecourses, plus Aldergrove airport on the outskirts of Belfast. No one is more astonished than Kenneth Clarke, now the proud owner of Epsom, home to the Derby, Sandown Park and Kempton Park.

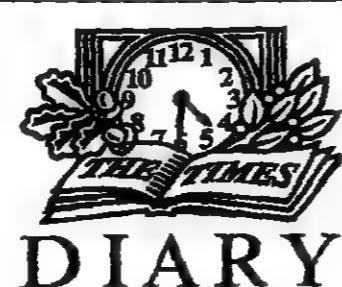
Dorrell's disclosure that the Home Office was in the racecourse business caught the department off guard. "I bet you were not as surprised as we were when we heard," said a spokesman. "Which ones do we own? Good question. I haven't a clue."

The government has owned the freeholds of the race tracks since the early 1960s. The Levy Board bought them to preserve racing on the sites after a public outcry greeted the sale of Hurst Park racecourse to housing developers in

1963. The courses are run by United Racetracks, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Levy Board, which is itself a Home Office creation. Any profits are ploughed back into racing. Tim Neiligan, the managing director, was surprised that Clarke was in the dark. "I can remember Willie Whitelaw and Kenneth Baker visiting the courses. Perhaps I should have mentioned that they owned the place."

Dorrell's mission to identify potential areas for contracting out has already been dubbed "the long march through Whitehall". Tipped as a future chancellor, he is believed to be considering an auction of his new-found haul, a prospect which horrifies the racing world.

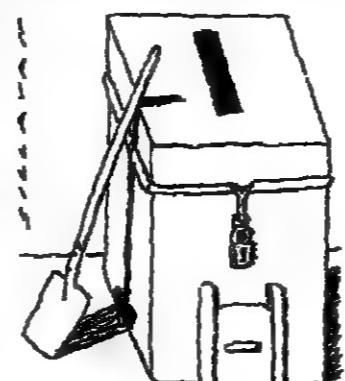
John Francome, seven times champion National Hunt jockey, was as astonished as the home secretary to hear that the government owned the racecourses. "I had no idea. I haven't seen many home secretaries at the races lately." But he is unconcerned about a possible change of ownership: "As long as it stays for racing I don't think the average punter will care whether the home secretary owns them or not."



For peat's sake

MORE dastardly tales from the Irish election. The director of elections for Fine Gael in North Tipperary has made an official promise to the Fianna Fail candidate for the Fianna Fail election day.

• JTN recently published *The Royal Year 1992* shows just how horribilis the royal annus was. Endless glossy pictures show the Queen, the Princess of Wales and the Princess Royal in designer frocks suffering interminable polo matches, trips to the races, jilted promises, and opera performances. Not to mention those trying trips to Canada, Kuwait, Seville, Pakistan, India, Egypt and of course the ski slopes.



tions. He is alleging that a Thurles coal merchant spent election day promising free coal and peat briquettes in return for a vote for Fianna Fail candidate Michael O'Kennedy. Rumours that those in North Tipperary with gas-fired central heating are protesting over the injustice are untrue.

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• Poor John Whittingdale (centre), torn between two leaders. The Tory MP for South Colchester and Maldon was formerly Baroness Thatcher's political secretary. Writing in *The House Magazine* he says optimistically: "I have never seen any contradiction in being a Majorite and a Thatcherite." Lady Thatcher may not agree. When Whittingdale abstained in the Maastricht vote she is said to have raged: "The trouble with you, John, is that your spine does not reach your brain."



• THE best wine waiter in the world is British. Well, ish. Gérard Basset, who won the Grand Prix Sopexa at the Grand Hotel, Paris, on Monday night, used to be French until he visited Britain nine years ago to watch Toulouse football team in action on British turf. A chef at the time, he fell in love with England and stayed. He now works in a Hampshire hotel and has become a British citizen. The runner-up, France's Eric Beaumont, is said to be "gutted".

Charter fight

DIFFICULT to imagine anyone owning up to having had the idea for the citizen's charter, let alone fighting over it, but a spat has broken out over who invented John Major's big idea. The Adam Smith Institute and the Institute for Economic Affairs have vied for the title in the past. Others insist the idea emanated from America. David Osborne and Ted Gashler, authors of the book *Reinventing Government*, have been credited with the concept. But the idea is Major's, with a lot of help from Sarah Hogg, the head of the Downing Street policy unit. And that's official.

14
The French political system is perilously biased towards the countryside, says Charles Brenner

Politics of the peasantry

France likes to think of itself as the cutting edge of new technology. The claim to modernity is well enough founded. You only have to think of those symbols of prowess, its cars, the TGV high-speed trains, the Minitel home data system, and those successful French-led projects, the Ariane rocket and the Airbus. Unemployment is high and rising, but life is still far better in France than most other countries. It continues to enjoy the highest growth rate of the industrialised powers and it clocked up another trade surplus last week by the drivers of the Paris Metro.

Le Gatt, as menacing an English acronym as you could find, has touched the rawest of national nerves at the worst time for a country already prone, as President Mitterrand put it in a moment of reflection last week, to a mood of *désarroi* (helplessness), anxiety and doubt.

Privately some politicians concede that rural reform is inextricably linked to the shake-up in the Common Agricultural Policy this year was a realistic measure which would preserve the livelihoods of the maximum number of small farmers and, bitter as it is, that the Gatt farm agreement will have to be swallowed in the

broadest national interest. *Libération*, the bible of the left-leaning, younger urban classes took a solitary leap in this direction yesterday, pointing out that the rhetoric in defence of French agriculture was stuffed with fallacy and falsehood. Such thoughts, however, are regarded as heresy.

The farmers, egged on by the Gaullist and centrist opposition, have whipped up a mood of exaltation and patriotic fury. The argument may be a murky and technical one about oilseed acreage and export subsidies, but the imagery, flashing through television news and spilling with the burning straw bales onto city squares, is utterly emotional. The soul of France is its land, the argument goes. "Sacrifice les agriculteurs", as the CAP reform and Gatt are said to be trying to do, and you destroy the fabric of rural life, the villages and the cherished landscape and replace it with US-dictated fallow or the industrialised "deserts" which have been inflicted on the land of America's mid-west.

Two millennia of national character sit on the tractor with François Mitterrand, an Auvergne peasant, as he tells reporters. "Since the days of Vercingetorix and perhaps before that, we have never done anything else but work the land." The myth of the plucky Gaulish *réistant*, more the cartoon Asterix than historical reality, has surged into the national consciousness in the Gatt drama.

other West Europeans. Generous CAP subsidy has enabled well over a million to keep farming, far more than in any comparable state. But the bond is strengthened politically by the tradition which sees so many ministers and senior politicians also serve as provincial mayors. In addition the parliamentary upper house, the Senate, is dominated by rural constituencies and acts as the voice of the countryside.

A stronger government in healthier times might have braved unpopularity and stood up to the latest *coup de colère* by the *paysans*, but the Socialists, crippled with a loss of authority, are eking out what most see as their final months before elections in March. They chose to run with the peasant tide. A change of government is unlikely to provide much relief or firm new leadership since France will still be led by its Socialist president for another two years, unless M. Mitterrand changes his mind about staying in the office he has held since 1981, or is forced out by illness.

He is now talking in his dethroning fashion about modifying the constitution of the Fifth Republic and the potential for deflating conflict between weak parliaments and the monarchial chief executive, but no one is holding their breath for action. History shows that it usually takes violent national trauma to force serious constitutional change on the French.

The threat yesterday of a Community coup may precipitate a European crisis blowing away the remains of Maastricht, but the inside betting is still that the peasant *jacquerie* will be allowed to run its course while the government plays for time and presses its partners for concessions to soften the blow to its agriculture.

Resigned to defeat, ministers are looking forward to passing the unloved Gatt baby to their successors in March. Since M. Mitterrand wants to go down in history as one of the architects of European integration, it is hard to see him resorting to the never-used and ultimate community weapon of a veto. In the meantime, the tractor offensive and the war of resistance over agriculture have at least had the beneficial effect of rallying the country behind a rare common cause.

The evil power of rumour

Society's tendency to jump to false conclusions can unleash the most destructive side of human nature, writes Bernard Levin



A few hours and some slit throats later the next quantum was reached: a culprit, Christophe Beddeleem. He was indeed dark-skinned and even pock-marked; he had a record of drug-taking and petty crime, though he had been cured of the drug habit and had come to the area from elsewhere to live with his mother and put all that behind him. No matter; a culprit had been found, and the next stop was clearly a lynching; he fled the neighbourhood and went into hiding.

In an attempt to stem the tide of madness, the local paper pointed out that the police had found no evidence of any wrongdoing, whether by the scapegoat or anyone else. No child was missing; none had been abused; no pornographic pictures had been seen by anyone. Nevertheless,

less, when the headmaster of the school arrived next day, he found a crowd not of 20 but of 200, some of them equipped with megaphones, and to the substantial variety of infantile practices already logged, burning alive had been added.

Gradually, this *folie en masse* died down; presumably the slit throats had been stitched up, the stomachs of the eviscerated victims carefully put back, the missing heads replaced from the local hospital's headbank, and all was peace again – except for that throat-cutting, too, was now right. No evidence of any kind was offered, though the conviction of the now raging parents was absolute.

And that is where I come in.

For I, when I read about the massacre of the innocents, leaped back 23 years in my

mind, and remembered a story that marched step by step, beside the story of the Calais rumours. In May 1969, in Orleans, a whisper began to run through the town; its substance was that there was white-slave traffic going on. The method used was simple: young women going into dress-shops were shepherded into fitting-cubicles and there drugged by injections. They were kept unconscious, in the shops' ceilings till night came, when they were smuggled out and sent abroad to be captive prostitutes.

The rumour began with one specified, dress-shop, called *Dorphée*; it was well known in the town, and had a high reputation for its wares; it had a fitting-room, at the back of the shop, and a basement. The first

rumour was that two women had been found by the police, drugged, in the basement of *Dorphée*; they had been taken to hospital, where they regained consciousness.

The rumour ran through the town like a mad bull; within a few days *Dorphée* had been joined by *Boutique de Sheila-Alexandrine, Félix, Le Petit Bé*, and D.D., all engaging in this dreadful trade. And all six of the shops were owned by Jews.

U nlike Calais, the local newspaper decided not to publish anything about the story. On the ground that publicity about it would spread it further and more rapidly; but like Calais, the police investigated the

rumour and found no evidence of such goings-on. Again like Calais, no one was reported missing, whether in sinister or explainable circumstances. The Public Prosecutor, too, looked into the story, and naturally found nothing amiss.

Nevertheless, just like Calais, the rumour went into full metastasis: it was claimed that the six shops running the terrible business were linked by underground tunnels (though some of the shops were several hundred yards away from any other, which ultimately ended in the Loire, where boats were waiting mighty to load their human cargo).

The next wave was inevitable, since the police, the press,

the town Prefect and all the

authorities were saying and doing

nothing. Nevertheless, just like Calais, the rumour went into full metastasis: it was claimed that the six shops running the terrible business were linked by underground tunnels (though some of the shops were several hundred yards away from any other, which ultimately ended in the Loire, where boats were waiting mighty to load their human cargo).

The madness of Calais and Orleans demonstrate plainly that reason has no place in the human heart, and precious little in the human head; it is astonishing that, over the centuries, we have never shaken off the delusion.

It was, after all, the human race which thought up the notion

"No smoke without fire", and

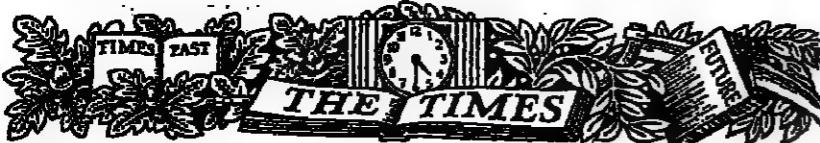
until the human race ceases to believe it we shall continue to see episodes like those in Calais and Orleans. It is happily true that neither in the Calais frenzy or the Orleans *arc-en-ciel* was anyone hurt let alone killed. But a very great number of people were killed in Auschwitz, their deaths having been ordered by a system based on the most thorough and logical premises, steeped in impeccable reason.

"Think it possible", said Cromwell, "you may be mistaken." Possible? Possible?

ART IN

Things should be seen

as they are, not as we have been taught to see them. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of life to be lived. The art of painting is not a product to be created, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered. The art of painting is not a technique to be mastered, but a way of experiencing the world to be lived. The art of painting is not a subject to be studied, but a way of expressing the self to be experienced. The art of painting is not a skill to be learned, but a way of seeing to be discovered



CITIZEN'S CANE

The public sector still has a lot to learn from the private

Even Mussolini was given grudging credit for draining the Pontine marshes and for making the trains run on time. Punctual public transport, like motherhood, wins instant popularity with voters. Most of the aims of the citizen's charter are equally desirable: who would argue with prompter medical treatment or Saturday evening driving tests? What is more questionable, though, is whether the charter will actually be able to achieve its ends.

Yesterday William Waldegrave, public service minister, reported on progress to date. The fact that politicians are even taking seriously the improvement of public services is in itself heartening. Under Baroness Thatcher the panacea for all public-sector ills was assumed to be privatisation. Many warned at the time that a private-sector monopoly would have no greater regard for its customers than a public-sector monopoly, even if it might make more money. They were proved right.

What John Major has recognised is that the incentives and deterrents of the marketplace need to be replicated for monopoly providers of services, whether they are state-owned or privatised. If customers cannot threaten to take their custom elsewhere, instead they have to be allocated rights which the service has a duty to meet. These rights may start with simple matters such as being treated courteously and quickly by a named official. They can escalate to the right to certain standards of service delivery.

But that is where the enforcement mechanism becomes difficult. Ensuring that officials are polite and wear name badges is virtually costless. Ensuring that a train runs on time is another matter. British Rail may now publish punctuality and reliability targets and its performance against these targets but yesterday's report admits that some targets are still not being met. The government might attribute this to poor

management; BR would undoubtedly cite underinvestment. Arguments about improving service inevitably come down to arguments about money.

One way to ensure that management is as good as it can be (and therefore that any shortfall in service really is down to lack of cash) is to make individuals responsible for improving their part of the service. Performance-related pay, now in place for 500,000 civil servants, is a start, though to work it must account for a sizeable percentage of their pay packet. But incentives are not enough; deterrents are needed too.

As anyone who works in the private sector knows, the most effective deterrent to doing a poor job is fear of demotion or, at worst, the sack. That fear is rarely present in the minds of public officials. But if Mr Waldegrave really is to replicate the disciplines of the marketplace within the public sector, job security cannot be taken for granted.

At a corporate level, he is already introducing such a deterrent. The government plans to "market-test" nearly £1.5 billion worth of central government activity next year; that is, to put services out to tender. This will be the reverse of the citizen's charter: the government will be the customer of private-sector companies, who will risk losing their contracts if their services are not up to scratch. But tendering should not be seen as a substitute for greater discipline in public-sector management. It ought to save the taxpayer money, but it will not in itself improve services to the citizen.

These will only get better through constant and grinding application of political will from the top and its percolation down through layers of civil-service management. The occasional official must lose his or her job. Others must be suitably rewarded. The main discipline that has to be imported from the private sector is whatever is needed to keep public servants on their toes.

CLINTON'S FIRST TEST

Homosexuals should be allowed to serve their country

The narrow defeat of Senator Wyche Fowler in a run-off election in Georgia is an early and unexpected blow to President-elect Bill Clinton, who campaigned vigorously for his fellow Democrat Republicans are already trumpeting this as proof that it was their candidate, not their message, that lost the presidential election. Mr Clinton invested much of his own political authority in Georgia's campaign. Already he is being accused, even before taking office, of backing away from his campaign promises, especially those to his liberal supporters.

No issue has brought this into more contentious focus than the case of Petty Officer Keith Meinholt. The 30-year-old naval sonar crew instructor was abruptly discharged after announcing on television that he was a homosexual. The navy offered no evidence that he had behaved improperly; the admission alone was sufficient grounds for throwing him out. Mr Meinholt went to court and was reinstated, with the judge accusing the Pentagon of "military dictatorship". The navy, aghast at the prospect of its long-standing taboo being broken, appealed. The argument has now been taken up by American society at large and has pitted Mr Clinton against influential politicians upon whose support he will depend, including General Colin Powell, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and Senator Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

No group gave more money and support to Mr Clinton's campaign than the rich and organised gay lobby. Stirred into action by the exclusionist policies of the Republican right, homosexuals across America worked hard to defeat George Bush; some 90 per

cent voted for Mr Clinton. Wisely refusing to be bound by any special interest group, especially one so likely to alienate middle America, he made few promises in return. He did, however, specifically commit himself to lifting the ban on homosexuals in the armed forces.

Mr Clinton must wish for some other first litmus test. No president wants to become involved in detailed policy before his inauguration; and Mr Clinton could do without a controversy that pits him against the hierarchy of the armed forces, whose commander-in-chief will shortly become.

To his credit, he has not retreated from his conviction that sexual orientation is not a ground for job exclusion. He has however recognised that special circumstances apply in the armed forces and has suggested a commission look into any change.

This is not, as critics are claiming, "fuzzing" the issue. Strict rules on sexual behaviour already apply in relations between military men and women, especially on board ship. So they should. Equally strict rules must govern any expression of homosexual conduct: lifting the ban on recruitment is not a licence for predatory behaviour.

That said, Mr Clinton must be firm in turning down the Navy's new attempt to get round the court ruling. It has now insisted on an enlistment "contract" which specifies that no recruit will be a homosexual — as if this were something that could be turned off, like smoking. Western society no longer sees homosexuality as a legitimate ground for discrimination. America and Britain are among the last western nations still believing the condition alone bars service in the forces. Both should think again.

ART IN ITS PROPER PLACE

Paintings should be seen in mufti as well as in gallery uniform

The fire at Windsor Castle came within a few minutes and yards of destroying one of the world's great collections. If the firefighters had not worked so fast last Friday, and if many of the rooms adjacent to the fire had not already been emptied for refurbishment, familiar masterpieces would have gone up in smoke, or been blackened beyond repair. Because of luck and the devotion of the rescuers, the only substantial painting that seems to have gone is a large and dispensable equestrian portrait of George III by Sir William Beechey.

But it was a close-run thing. And it raises questions about the care and display of art. Paintings of the quality of the Queen's collection would be safer in a gallery, with controlled atmosphere, modern wiring, sophisticated smoke-detection and fire-dous- ing equipment and constant attendants. They would also be better seen by people.

However, something of value would be lost if all great art were removed from the place for which it was painted, and concentrated into high-tech laboratories for paintings called galleries. The best place to see many paintings is their original or adopted home, whether it be a Florentine church so dimly lit that the prudent visitor takes a powerful torch as well as binoculars, or converted houses such as the Frick Museum on Fifth Avenue, or the Lázaro Galdiano Museum in Madrid, which preserve the taste of the original collector.

Context adds to art, and only professionals can ever enjoy paintings displayed like

fish on a slab or stamps in an album. The concept of a public art gallery is quite recent. Cosimo de' Medici commissioned Vasari to build the Uffizi, but, as its name declares, he built it as offices, for the government judiciary. It was a century later that it was turned into the first and still the greatest gallery, for the Medici collections.

The gallery has become a part of civilised existence. And some of the latest designs and displays, as in the Sainsbury wing of the National Gallery, and, it is to be hoped, in the controversial extension to the Prado, display paintings better than ever before, with new vistas opening up around every corner. The latest gallery techniques of showing paintings in a domestic context offend the purists, so that upstairs at the National Gallery of Scotland has been described as a tart's boudoir.

But it would be a sadder world where one could not see the huge Van Dyck of the entire Pembroke clan at home at Wilton House, or imagine oneself back to proud Bess of Hardwick with her relations at Hardwick Hall. Kewle's Yard in Cambridge is an inspiring way of seeing modern British art because it is more private home than gallery.

Both are needed. The best modern galleries are safer, and allow more visitors to enjoy their treasures. But the state palaces and little houses must keep their paintings. Art is not to be institutionalised in a ghetto. They need to look to their fire precautions. Art is too important to be left to the curators.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 071-782 5000

7

Repairing the damaged castle — and who foots the bill?

From the Right Reverend Maurice Wood

Sir, Your awesome photograph of the Windsor Castle fire (November 21), like that of St Paul's Cathedral surrounded by flames in the London Blitz of 1941, will remain in the visual memory into the next century. Great tragedies call for major actions.

I well remember the Queen attending a thanksgiving service in Norwich Cathedral in April 1975, after the interior roof timbers were restored. Sir Edmund Bacon, the Lord Lieutenant, had invited the landowners of Norfolk and Suffolk each to give us oak, and the Queen had immediately responded herself from her Sandringham estate.

It would be a generous and imaginative gesture if one of the counties associated with the Queen's homes started by giving some timber for the Windsor Castle restoration, and other counties would surely follow in this fortieth year of the Queen's reign. In ten years it would be an occasion of great national pride to see the castle gloriously restored for the Queen's golden jubilee.

Meanwhile may fire disaster lead us all to pray more earnestly at this troubled time for Her Majesty and every member of our royal family.

Yours faithfully,
MAURICE WOOD,
(Bishop of Norwich 1971-1985),
St Mark's House, Englefield,
Nr Reading, Berkshire.
November 21.

From Mr R. J. Guy

Sir, If Windsor Castle belongs to the state but the Queen regards it as her home, should she not pay rent?

Yours faithfully,
R. J. GUY,
866 Washwood Heath Road,
Ward End, Birmingham 8.
November 24.

From Mr Tim Jackaman

Sir, The national heritage secretary's premature assurance that the taxpayer would foot the bill for the restoration of Windsor Castle (report, November 24) robbed the Queen of

the public relations opportunity of the decade by not allowing her to preserve a national treasure and pay for what will undoubtedly be one of the most challenging and impressive restoration projects of our times.

By charging the Prince of Wales with responsibility for the project, such an initiative would also have allowed Her Majesty to provide a role for the prince which combines many of his major concerns — art, architecture and the nation's heritage.

Yours etc.,
TIM JACKAMAN
(Managing Director,
Square Mile Communications Ltd,
Glade House,
52-54 Carter Lane, EC4.

From Mr Roger Bush

Sir, For many years the management and maintenance of royal palaces has been a responsibility of the state, undertaken successively through the Ministry of Public Building and Works, the Department of the Environment and English Heritage.

The question is, therefore: "Does the Queen have the right to say: 'I don't think I'll bother to have the roof put back on — it would cost too much'?" The answer is clearly "No", and indeed some costs may already have been incurred by the state through the employment of experts to assess the damage. And if the monarch has no choice in the matter, it follows that there can be no obligation on her to pay the bill.

If the fire had taken place at Balmoral or Sandringham, matters would have been different, for those homes are part of her estate. But over Windsor, Hampton Court or the Tower of London we cannot turn the clock back, and it is futile to argue about who pays.

Parliament took on the risk of repair bills when it took on the management of these palaces. No doubt it was felt that they were part of the fabric of the nation. If we can't afford such costly fabric let us not try to pretend that someone else should pay.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER BUSH,
54 Farley Road,
Selston, South Croydon, Surrey.
November 24.

Fire precautions to protect nation's heritage buildings

From Mr A. C. Parnell, FRIBA

Sir, In March, after several years' work by specialists from member states, a preliminary draft recommendation on the protection of the architectural heritage against natural disasters (including fire) was submitted for approval to the Council of Ministers.

The draft contains much of relevance, including recommendations for procedures in case of disaster and for safe working practice by those undertaking alterations to buildings or their contents. Governments would also be encouraged to insure all such buildings as Windsor Castle, which they could do more economically than meeting restoration costs as at present.

Unfortunately the draft has yet to be adopted. The United Kingdom has raised fundamental objections to the proposals, based partly on the issue of interference with the rights of property ownership.

It is high time that the Department of National Heritage and English

Heritage recommended the adoption of these proposals.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN C. PARNELL
(UK committee representative;
President, Institution of Fire
Engineers, 1985-6);
12 Tonbridge Chambers,
Tonbridge, Kent.
November 24.

From Mr Simon Hoffman

Sir, Rather than debating the wrongs and rights of the state meeting the cost of repairs to Windsor Castle we should be looking at how the fire was allowed to happen in such a financially and historically valuable structure and at making sure such an event never occurs again in a building of such importance.

One wonders why, if (as reported) the damage may cost some six times the amount spent renovating Hampton Court after the fire there, a government enquiry has not been announced, as it was for Hampton

pitals, rehabilitation units and day hospitals. At the same time it is quite clear that all those who are very ill and potentially recoverable should be treated in intensive care and high-dependency units where highly trained doctors, nurses and special equipment can be concentrated.

A common problem with our present hospitals is that they were constructed for needs that have changed. Actual bed numbers are far less important than the skills and services that can be provided and future hospital architects will need a more imaginative approach to take account of potential developments. Hitherto they have failed to do so, which explains why many of our present hospitals are more akin to building sites.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID CROSBY
(Consultant surgeon,
University Hospital of Wales,
Heath Park, Cardiff CF4 4XW).

From Mr D. L. Crosby

Sir, The sad stories (article, November 7, letter, November 16) of old valuable manuscripts, papers, correspondence and memorabilia having been lost through ignorance or carelessness make me wonder how future generations of historians will feel about the cavalier fashion in which present-day prime historical material is being treated.

The following little known example may, or may not, be typical.

The conversations of the ten German atomic scientists interned in Farm Hall, a country house near Cambridge, from July until the end of December 1945 were picked up by microphones and listened to. Scientifically and politically interesting parts of the conversations were recorded on shellac-covered, reusable metal discs and transcribed.

Intelligence officers analysed these transcripts. The English translations of the important parts and summaries of the rest were collated in reports FH1-FH24 which remained "top secret" until February 1992.

Unfortunately when these were released to the Public Record Office the original German transcripts were not attached to them and strenuous efforts to locate this primary historical material have so far been unsuccessful. They may have been mislaid, lost or deliberately destroyed.

It is not too far-fetched to compare this with the imagined — albeit unimaginable — archaeological case of a sculpture (the German transcript) being destroyed, with only photographs of parts of it (the English translation) and descriptions of the rest (the summaries) remaining.

Archaeologists would rightly be up in arms. How about historians?

Yours faithfully,

N. KURT,

University of Oxford,

Department of Engineering Science,

Parks Road, Oxford.

From Mr Charles L. Yarwood

Sir, Mr Simon Grice who, because of falling exchange rates, has lost 16 per cent of his UK salary by transferring it to his Swiss bank while fulfilling a short contract at a European research establishment in Switzerland, wonders where his shortfall now resides (letter, November 24).

His money is perhaps being put to better use in the British economy by his *doppelgänger*: a Swiss gentleman who has a short contract at a European research establishment in the UK.

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES L. YARWOOD

(Managing Director and Chairman,

Imperial Buildings (Horley) Ltd,

Horley, Boreham Lane,

Iffield, Crawley, West Sussex.

November 17.

From Mr Brian Fly

Sir, It may be interesting to note that the relevant statute (The Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act) now uses no fewer than 1,239 words,

and the usual plethora of figures,

clauses and sub-clauses to give effect to the pitiful £10 Christmas bonus for pensioners.

Yours etc.,

BRIAN FLY,

No 1 Airport House,

Blackpool Airport,

Blackpool, Lancashire.

November 17.

From Mr Alastair Duncan

Sir, On looking at the photograph (November 25) of the winning entry for the Turner Prize I wondered whether the two pieces of steel tube had originally been made by Matrix



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
November 25: Mr Peter Smith was received in audience by The Queen and kissed hands upon his appointment as Her Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary at Antananarivo. Mrs Smith was also received by Her Majesty.

The Archbishop of Canterbury was received in audience by The Queen.

His Excellency Mr Franklin A. Baron was received in farewell audience by Her Majesty and took leave upon His Excellency relinquishing his appointment as High Commissioner for the Commonwealth of Dominica in London.

The President of the Royal Warrant Holders Association (Mr David Palengat) was received by The Queen and presented to Her Majesty a painting to mark the Fortieth Anniversary of The Queen's Ascension. Mrs Mara McGregor (artistic and Commercial Hugh Palmer (Secretary of the Association) were also present.

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh held an Evening Reception at Buckingham Palace for the Diplomatic Corps at which The Prince and Princess of Wales, The Duke of York and Princess Alexandra, the Hon Lady Ogilvy and the Hon Sir Angus Ogilvy were present.

The String Orchestra of The Life Guards played selections of music during the evening.

Her Majesty's Body Guard of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen at Arms, The Queen's Body Guard of the Yeomen of the Guard and a dismounted detachment of the Household Cavalry were on duty.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Senior Fellow, the Royal Academy of Engineering, this morning presented The Prince Philip Medal at

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

November 25: Lieutenant Colonel Charles Linford today had the honour of being received by The Duke of York, Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Irish Regiment upon relinquishing his appointment as Commanding Officer of the Regiment.

Lieutenant Colonel Patrick Chambers, MBE, had the honour of being received by His Royal Highness upon assuming his appointment as Commanding Officer of the Regimental Depot.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
November 25: The Princess Royal today visited Humberside and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Humberside (Mrs Anthony Bethell).

Her Royal Highness opened Princes Quay Shopping and Leisure Development, Hull.

The Princess Royal, President, Save the Children Fund, visited

the Save the Children Fund Shop at 269 Holderness Road.

Her Royal Highness, Commandant in Chief, St John Ambulance and Nursing Cadets, opened the new St John Headquarters at Barton upon Humber and attended a fund-raising Reception at Wythill Hall.

The Princess Royal subsequently opened the National Fishing Heritage Centre at Great Grimsby.

Her Royal Highness, President, Riding for the Disabled Association, this afternoon visited the Cleethorpes and Grimsby Group at Weelsby Park Riding School, Weelsby Road, Grimsby.

The Royal, President, the British Academy of Film and Television Arts this evening attended a dinner at Le Meridien Hotel, 21 Piccadilly, London W1. Mr Richard Carew-Pole was in attendance.

CLARENCE HOUSE
November 25: Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother this morning visited the Headquarters of the British Red Cross Society, and presented The Queen's Badge of Honour and Certificate Class I to

Mrs P.H. Sanderson and Mr R.M. Mrs Rhodes and Sir Alastair Aitken were in attendance.

Her Majesty opened the extension to the London Library in Mason's Yard, SW1, this evening.

The Hon Mrs Rhodes and Sir Martin Gilliat were in attendance.

KENSINGTON PALACE
November 25: The Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, this morning presided at a Meeting of The Prince's Council.

KENSINGTON PALACE
November 25: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon was present this evening at The Royal Concert given at the Royal Festival Hall in aid of the Musicians Benevolent Fund and allied musical charities.

The Lady Glenconner was in attendance.

KENSINGTON PALACE
November 25: The Duke of Gloucester, President, National Association of Boys' Clubs, today visited Boys' Clubs in Brixton.

Her Royal Highness was received by Colonel Hugh Tandy (Dame) Lieutenant of Greater London.

Mrs Peter Afia was in attendance.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: John Alexander Newlands, chemist, London, 1837; Pat Phoenix actress, Galway, Ireland, 1923.

DEATHS: John MacAdam, inventor of the road surface that bears his name, Moffat, Dumfriesshire, 1836; Sir Leander Jameson, leader of the abortive raid into the Transvaal, London, 1917; Tommy Dorsey, jazz musician, Greenwich, Connecticut, 1956; Cyril Connolly, critic, London, 1974.

Over 8,000 people perished in the "Great Storm," 1703.

YORK HOUSE
November 25: The Duke of Kent attended.

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anyone who therefore can make over the least of the love's demands, and because others do the same, will have the love's peace in the Kingdom of Heaven.

St Matthew 8: 19

BIRTHS

CHAPMAN - On November 19th, to Fiona (née Petty) and Nick, a son, Freddie.

CLAYTON - On November 24th, to Clare (née Hartson) and Nick, a son, Daniel.

COTTERELL - On November 25th, to Roberta (née Williamson) and Robert, a daughter, Charlotte Anne, wife Christopher, a daughter.

DUGGINS - On November 25th, to Helen, the Honourable Sophie Duggins, and David, a son, Michael Edward.

FREEMAN - On November 25th, to Roberta (née Williamson) and Robert, a daughter, Jennifer Sophie, a son, Thomas.

FRY - On 23rd November, at Sydenham Adelphi, London, William, New Zealand, and Vicki, a son, Alexei; and Sophie, a son, Alexander, Thomas.

GORDON-MACLEOD - On November 20th, to Adrienne and David, a daughter, Sophie, and Alice, sister for Kristina.

GRANT - On November 22nd, to Linda and Richard, a son, Robert Alexander James.

LAWRENCE - On 13th November 1990, to Sophie (née Greville) and David, a son, Henry Alexander, a brother for Louise.

LAWRENCE - On November 23rd, to Michael (née Marler) and Michael, a son, William, a daughter for Amanda, a son, James.

MURDOCH - On 28th November, to Sue (née Turner) and Roger, a beautiful daughter, Lorraine Rose, a sister for Jennifer and William.

WALLS - On November 23rd, to Julie (née Butcher) and David, a daughter, Isabella.

MARRIAGES

TALBOT - BIRMINGHAM - On July 1st 1992, in Seattle, Washington USA, Fredrik Carl Johnsson, son of Kurt Bergström and Mrs Marianne, Cobham, England and Astrid and Kaihleen Eleonor Talbot, only daughter of Bruce and Judy Talbot, California USA.

DEATHS

GREEN - A Service of Thanksgiving for the late Mr. David George Holliday and mother of Paul and Michael will be held on Saturday November 28th, 1992 at 10.30 am at St. John's Church, Chipping Barnet, on Saturday November 28th. Donations may be sent to the Crematorium, Chipping Barnet, Harrow, Middlesex.

HOLLOWAY - On November 20th, 1992, to Mrs. (née of David George Holliday and mother of Paul and Michael) will be sorely missed by her family and friends. The funeral service will be held at St. John's Church, Chipping Barnet, on Saturday November 28th. Donations may be sent to the Crematorium, Chipping Barnet, Harrow, Middlesex.

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MEMORIAL SERVICES

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John Malkovich in the new film Of Mice and Men



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Floodlit Tests inevitable says Cowdrey

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THE TIMES

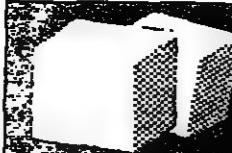
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THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26 1992



BUSINESS TODAY

BITTER SWEET

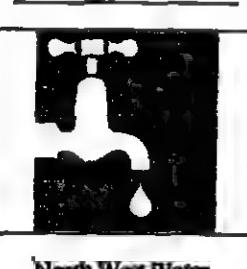


Tate & Lyle, the sugar group, hopes for recovery this year despite its first profits setback for 14 years
Pages 22 and 24

LIGHTING UP

Growth in eastern Europe helped Rothmans International to slightly higher profits Tempus, page 24

WATERTIGHT



North West Water lifted profits and is targeting occupied homes that are not paying water bills
Pages 22 and 24

US dollar 1.5277 (+0.0115)
German mark 2.4252 (-0.0048)
Exchange Index 78.7 (same)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

FT 30 share 2033.1 (-7.0)
FT-SE 100 2709.6 (-17.5)
New York Dow Jones 3261.40 (+12.70)*
Tokyo Nikkei Avgs. 17302.01 (+205.92)

London Bank Base: 7%
3-month interbank: 7.1-7.1%
3-month eligible bills: 6.1-6.4%
US Prime Rate: 11.5%
Federal Funds: 3.5%
3-month Treasury Bills: 3.24-3.23%
30-year bonds: 100.00-100.25*

London: E 51.5240 New York: E \$1.5257*
E DM2.4277 E DM1.5915*
E SwF2.1771 E SwFr4.2285*
E FF9.2180 E FF5.3940*
E Yen188.64 E Yen123.87*
Euro 78.7 E 100.00 E 101.00
E SDR1.08740 London Forex market close

London Fixing: AM 5334.75 PM 5334.85
Close 5334.80 E 219.00-220.00
New York: Close 5.3321.05-3321.15*

Brent (Dec) \$18.20/bbl (\$19.15)
Petroleum spot price

RPI: 139.9 October (1987=100)
* Denotes midday trading price

Ratner quits the family firm

Chief executive pays price for attracting bad publicity

By MARTIN WALLER
DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

GERALD Ratner has resigned from the jewellery chain that bears his name after shareholders blamed him for a remorseless downward spiral in the group's fortunes.

Mr Ratner is going as chief executive because of the welter of bad publicity since his widely reported remarks to the Institute of Directors in April 1991. "The continuing negative press I have attracted leads me to believe that this decision is in the interests of the group and the people working for it," he said.

James McAdam, who replaced Mr Ratner as chairman in January, will take over day-to-day running of the jewellery business in Britain, while the American operations will report directly to him through Nathan Light, the US chief executive.

Mr McAdam said the decision had been reached by Mr Ratner himself, and there had been no pressure from the board for him to leave.

"He's been 26 years with the group. It's the end of an era," he said. "The timing is small, but it's built it up from small beginnings to the size it is today."

"These things are always sad, when somebody goes after such a period and we have worked closely together."

A formal statement read: "The board would like to record its appreciation of Mr Ratner's immense contribution to the development of the group during his period of 26 years' service."

Mr Ratner admitted his unhappiness at leaving the group he had almost single-handedly created. "I am obviously saddened to be leaving a business of which I am so proud," he said.

Mr Ratner was on a three-year contract at £375,000 a year and will receive one year's payment in compensation for loss of office. He retains a holding of 800,000 shares, worth £14,000 at last night's

share price down 1p at 18p ahead of the news of his departure.

Mr McAdam refused to comment on the all-important Christmas trading season already under way, saying the information was price-sensitive. Ratner's performance on the high street over the next few weeks, when most of the country's jewellery sales take place, will, some observers believe, decide the group's continued survival in the light of its huge debts.

But he did say the resignation was not related to trading.

At the end of September, Mr Ratner faced a barrage of criticism from hostile shareholders at the company's annual meeting, with continued calls for his sacking. A man who, during his rise, was a master of self-publicity, he was uncharacteristically silent, and all questions from the floor of the meeting were fielded by Mr McAdam.

The chairman insisted at the time — despite vociferous claims that the fastest way out of the group's problems would be Mr Ratner's departure — that such a course of action

was "not on the table."

Shareholders, typically unforgiving of one of retail's best-known fallen heroes, claimed then that Mr Ratner was too much of a burden, despite his evident trading skills. One attacked the salary he earned last year, a sum of £574,000 that has since been reduced, as "obscene."

The group was also forced to announce, on the day of the annual meeting, a deepened half-way pre-tax loss of £30.6 million, down from £17.7 million.

Total debts at that stage stood at £266 million.

Mr Ratner is now thought to have bowed to the inevitable after further pressure both from shareholders and from his fellow directors, concerned that the tide of bad publicity has still not ebbed as bad as hoped.

There was some surprise in the City at the abruptness of his departure, however. Julie Ramsay, retail analyst at Morgan Stanley, commented:

"It obviously couldn't have been terribly comfortable for him, with so many things going wrong, to have new people coming in and dictating strategy."

"He's very much married to his business and he seemed pretty committed to making the whole thing work. I don't see him as a guy who gives up that easily."

"There seems to be a degree of conviction that the bold strategy adopted will work eventually, albeit after a long and arduous haul."

He commanded tremendous respect from his staff despite the difficult times the group was trading through, she said, and his departure could therefore be damaging to morale.

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Confident: Neil Shaw, chairman, is looking forward to growth in core markets

Ford Credit rebuked on finance scheme

By LINDSAY COOK
MONEY EDITOR

FORD is withdrawing literature about its Options finance scheme after the Office of Fair Trading found it to be in breach of the Consumer Credit Regulations.

Ford Credit has given a voluntary undertaking to Sir Bryan Cartberg, director-general of fair trading, that it will amend advertising sales literature and sales training material about the scheme.

Options has been so successful that it has accounted for a third of sales to retail customers since it went national in June. Other manufacturers have launched similar deals.

The buyer puts down a deposit of 20 or 30 per cent and the dealer works out the minimum guaranteed residual value of the car at the end of the two- to four-year period.

The residual value is then deducted from the capital sum, and capital repayments are based on the amount left. However, interest is paid on the whole sum. At the end of the period, the buyer either pays the residual value, gets the dealer to sell the car or can just hand the vehicle back and pay no more.

The advertisements and brochures promoting the scheme compared it with a bank loan. Sir Bryan considered that was misleading. When a car purchase is financed by a personal loan the customer owns the car from the moment it leaves the showroom and can sell it. But under the Options scheme, the car remains the property of Ford until the final payment.

The literature sought to convey that the scheme was cheaper than a bank loan, but Sir Bryan did not think it made a true comparison.

Ford Credit said: "We only used the figures for bank loans as an easily understood alternative method of buying a car."

CBI to study grievances over funds for training

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BUSINESS leaders decided yesterday to carry out the first industry-based survey of the government's training and enterprise councils, the private sector-led bodies that administer training in Britain.

Some companies that sit on the 82 training and enterprise councils (Tecs) around the country are becoming disenchanted, especially over funding and financial strictures. Some threatened to walk out if matters were not improved in the government's Autumn Statement. Despite the statement's measures, the Confederation of British Industry's governing council yesterday decided to study the Tec's operations and investigate the funding grievances.

Sir Michael Angus, CBI president, accepted that there had been discontent over the EC

funding. The council approved a questionnaire to ask Tec how far they think they are achieving their objectives, and try to determine how accountable they are. It will suggest a different funding method, removing them from the ambit of the employment department, putting them under a separate funding agency, which would agree contracts with each Tec and measure their performance.

Though the CBI has informed the employment department of its intention, it said yesterday the enquiry would be independent.

In advance of the EC



Europe on the agenda: Howard Davies, CBI director general, believes Germany should be made aware of its impact

Evangelist may be sole runner for TVS

Resistance from shareholders stands in the path of American Pat Robertson's bid for the broadcaster, writes Martin Waller

THE second putative bidder for TVS Entertainment, the ITV contractor for the south, has pulled out after a look at the books, leaving the field clear for Pat Robertson's International Family Entertainment (IFE).

But an unholy row is brewing over the American TV evangelist's proposed takeover, which has the blessing of the TV's board and foreshadows the creation of a satellite channel that could bring together such diverse attractions as *Lou Grant*, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, the Ruth Rendell detective mysteries and *The Waltons*.

A group of preference

shareholders in TVS claim to have sufficient votes to block the deal on technical grounds, even though IFE can count on a certain 35 per cent and a probable 50 per cent acceptance for the bid.

TVS yesterday said that a third party approach received this month, which came after the board had thrown its weight behind Mr Robertson's £45.3 million offer, had come to nothing after "de-

tailed financial and other information" had been supplied to the possible bidder, a New York TV producer with the backing of an American financial institution. The board is again urging IFE acceptance, saying that other alternatives have been considered and would not offer the same value.

But preference holders are upset at the terms on offer, 45p in cash for each prefer-

ence and 23p each ordinary share or IFE equity worth on average 26 per cent more than the cash. They are aggrieved at the support given by Mary Tyler Moore, the actress, to IFE in respect of a block of shares that have yet to be issued.

Miss Tyler Moore and Mel Blumenthal, two of the original sellers of the MTM TV production company to TVS in 1988, are taking shares representing 5.9 per cent of the votes as a delayed portion of the original purchase price. Under the terms of the acquisition they are required to accept the IFE offer. Julian Treger, of Restructuring Ad-

visers, the consultant who are advising some preference holders says they will vote at a forthcoming extraordinary meeting on December 10 against a special resolution needed to allow the IFE offer to succeed. This is a limitation of 10 per cent on any one holding in TVS and requires a 75 per cent majority.

TVS's advisers, however, believe the preference holders are indulging in a spoiling tactic which would block any takeover of TVS. The purchase of MTM sparked the decline in the fortunes of TVS that reached its nadir when the company lost the franchise for the South last year.

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THE TIMES THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26 1992

Tate & Lyle payout sweetens profit setback

By GEORGE SIVELL

TATE & Lyle, the sugar and sweeteners group, has suffered its first profit setback for 14 years, but the shares rebounded by 12p to 368p yesterday, reflecting board hopes for recovery in the current year.

Pre-tax profit for the year to end-September fell from a restated £230.8 million to £189.5 million. But as a sign of confidence in the future the total dividend for the year is raised 7.1 per cent to 12p a share out of earnings down from 33p to 26.2p.

Neil Shaw, the chairman, said: "In spite of the reduction in earnings last year we are confident of future growth in our core markets and our ability to extend our global reach in them."

Tate blamed £30 million of the profits shortfall on Staley, its American cereal sweeteners and starches business, which suffered from overcapacity compounded by a cold, wet summer in

the northern US. Tate said this was the third wettest and second coldest on record this century. Staley's payroll was cut by 25 per cent.

Staley has recently started making Stellar, which replaces fat in foods such as salad dressing, cakes, desserts and meat products. The market for fat replacements in America is, as yet, small and competitive. Tate claims 15 per cent of a £17 million market, but the market is said to have a potential of billions of dollars.

Tate & Lyle's other big problem area was Western Sugar, the American beet company. Tate says Western was responsible for £10 million of the profit shortfall and suffered from the "most difficult weather conditions in living memory for beet storage." Tate said that the deteriorated beets yielded less sugar and with prices very low, Western only scraped into profit.

Mr Shaw said that "in markets other than the United States good perfor-

mance was again achieved and a record level of investment in new plant and equipment spread across all our markets laid the groundwork for future progress".

During the year, Tate & Lyle's borrowings rose from 8 per cent to 89 per cent of shareholders' funds. The group traditionally believes in using debt to finance expansion because of the strong cash flows from its operations. Nevertheless it hopes to reduce borrowings this year. The year just ended saw a cash outflow of £89 million, an improvement on the £150 million outflow in the previous year. Operations generated £290 million, against £315 million last time.

Tate's reserves were hit by a revaluation of its Plaistow site in East London to £4 million, against the 1989 valuation of £16 million. A further £54 million was also written off reserves to account for goodwill from acquisitions. This included £21 million to deal with

Tempus, page 24

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

North West Water targets non-payers

NORTH West Water is linking up with electricity distributors to identify homes that are occupied but where the householders are not paying their water bills. The company is using customer lists from Norweb and Manweb, the two distributors serving the north-west. The action has led to a sharp reduction in the number of homes registered as empty, and therefore not liable for water charges, in its area.

North West pushed pre-tax profits ahead by £7 million to £130.7 million in the six months to September 30. The interim dividend is raised by 9 per cent, from 6.54p to 7.13p. Bob Thian, the chief executive, said the company was confident of reaching agreement on favourable terms with the industry regulator by the end of the year over the size of next year's price rise. North West is claiming that additional costs to cut pollution mean that it should not be forced to limit next year's price increase. Tempus, page 24

Strike ballot at bank

WORKERS at TSB Group, who have seen more than 5,000 jobs go at the bank in the past three years, are to be balloted on taking selective strike action over the cuts. Another 600 jobs are due to go at the bank this month, according to Bisfu, the banking union, which believes 600 more will be shed in the new year. The executive of the union has decided to ballot their 20,000 members at the bank, which is making redundancies under a branch reorganisation programme. Ballot papers will be issued next week and the result will be known by Christmas.

Harmony seeks peace

A REVIEW of business at Harmony Leisure and the appointment of two new directors has been announced in a last ditch attempt to pacify shareholders ahead of today's extraordinary meeting. Guinness Mahon, the merchant bank, will review current operations, future business plans and corporate strategy. A preliminary report will be made in six weeks with detailed recommendations to follow. The review comes after consultations between the restaurants group and major shareholders "to canvass opinion and gauge support for Harmony's future strategy".

GPT wins BT order

GPT, the telecommunications equipment supplier jointly owned by General Electric Company and Siemens of Germany, has secured a £579 million contract to supply System X digital exchanges to BT. The order will underpin 2,500 jobs at GPT's plant in Liverpool. However, the exchanges, which will be installed over the next three years, are expected to be the last needed by BT to complete modernisation plans. GPT is stepping up efforts to sell System X overseas and to develop new products.

Pegasus chief leaves

THE chief executive of Pegasus, the computer software supplier, has left because of a "difference in management style". The departure of Jonathan Hubbard-Ford comes as the group carries out a strategic review of its business in the wake of trading problems. Pegasus said it would have plunged into the red, but for a £1.25 million profit on the sale of a 25 per cent stake in one of its businesses. Earlier this month the company reported a slide in pre-tax profits for the year to July from £1.7 million to £655,000.

Hartstone ahead

HARTSTONE, the leather goods and hosiery company, increased pre-tax profits from £8.2 million to £10.5 million in the six months to end-September. Turnover was £162.1 million (£92.8 million) in the wake of the purchase of two continental hosiery companies in November. The £65 million rights issue to partly fund the acquisitions diluted earnings per share from 7.7p to 6.7p. Reorganisation and other costs of £2.5 million have been charged against operating profit. The interim dividend is 2.8p (1.875p).

ABI Leisure cuts payout

ABI LEISURE, the caravan manufacturer, has cut its dividend despite lifting pre-tax profits 11.3 per cent to £2.3 million in the year to end-August. Turnover rose to £56.2 million (£52.3 million) and earnings were 5.8p (5.7p). A final dividend of 2.19p (3.13p) a share makes a total for the year of 3.76p (4.7p). The decision to cut the dividend was taken "as a matter of prudence" because an expected recovery in the UK market had failed to materialise. The shares rose 6p to 50p.

Holographics cuts loss

APPLIED Holographics, which makes embossed holograms, mainly for credit cards, continues to cut the losses that have plagued it since it joined the Unlisted Securities Market in 1984. In the six months to September, on turnover of £2.4 million, down 3.6 per cent on the same period last year, the company had a pre-tax loss of £622,383, against a £681,394 loss last time. Trading in the first half was slow, the board said. Holographic sales were below expectations because some orders were delayed.

Mid Kent edges up

MID Kent Holdings, the water company, reported a slight rise in pre-tax profits from £4.2 million to £4.3 million for the six months to the end of September. Operating profit was 5.4 per cent up, but Mid Kent said capital expenditure reduced the amount of interest received from cash balances. For the full year, Mid Kent said it was unlikely there would be any profit growth. The half-year dividend is up 5.5 per cent to 4.75p out of earnings up from 19.1p to 19.3p a share. The shares fell 1p to 253p.

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JERSEY EUROPEAN



Power supply firms present scheme to save pit jobs

■ Regional electricity companies want to save 15,000 miners' jobs and half the pits threatened with closure by giving British Coal time to reduce its costs to world levels

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THREE regional electricity companies have blamed the government for the crisis in the coal industry, saying ministers failed to inject sufficient competition into power generation or give British Coal enough time to get costs down.

Half of the 31 pits threatened with closure could be saved, along with the jobs of 15,000 miners, under proposals outlined to the trade and industry select committee enquire into the coal industry by Norweb, Southern Electricity and Yorkshire Electricity.

The power suppliers also called for the break-up of Britain's two biggest generators, National Power and PowerGen, into at least five competing companies.

Duncan Ross, chairman of Southern Electric, said regional companies would like to buy more power generated by burning British-mined coal to meet their obligations to ensure a secure power supply. But they were reluctant to sign five-year contracts for large power volumes because their monopoly over the "franchise" market of small and medium-sized companies was being progressively removed.

He suggested the monopoly over the franchise market should be extended until 1998. According to Southern, that would deprive medium-sized customers of a 0.1p KW/h reduction in power prices. However, all customers will receive a price cut of 0.3p/KW/h as a result of British Coal's offer to cut its

prices in new contracts to take effect next April.

"We consider that the volume of medium-term contracts with British Coal currently envisaged — some 30 million tonnes — is limited principally by the size of the regional companies' franchise market and not by the total market for coal," Southern said in its submissions.

If the franchise boundary were to remain at 1 megawatt,

it said, "we estimate the market for medium term British Coal contracts could be increased to some 55 million tonnes in 1993-4 and to some 45 million tonnes thereafter".

A steady market of 45 million tonnes could require as many as 35 deep mines,

and should provide British Coal with the breathing space needed to get its prices down to world market levels.

The total market would remain at about 57 million tonnes and British Coal should be able to compete with increasing effectiveness against imports, which make up the balance of the market, as its costs fall.

The power companies were also critical of the creation of an electricity market in England and Wales where National Power and PowerGen, control more than 60 per cent of sales.

Ken Harvey, chairman of Norweb, said that a split into a larger number of competitors would create competition and presumably reduce prices.

Letters, page 25

ML ready to stem its losses

By DEREK HARRIS

LOSSES continued in the first half to September for ML Holdings, the aerospace, defence and electronic group. However, in the wake of a recent top management shake-up, the company said tougher financial controls were now producing improvements, with a promise of a return to profitability next year.

Turnover at £40.2 million was marginally up on the comparable period last year but the pre-tax loss stood at nearly £1.5 million, against a £1.3 million loss. There is no interim dividend. Much of the latest loss arose from a £1.1 million settlement of a legal action concerning a hovercraft supply contract.

Substantial cost reductions had been achieved in the first weeks of the second half-year, said ML. It was confidently expected that this trend and some savings made in the first half would return the group to a "satisfactory" level of profitability next year. Sell-off candidates had been identified for when prices are right.

Campaign launched to boost exports

By COLIN NARBROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE government has unveiled its master plan for export promotion which it hopes will help recapture Britain's diminished share of world trade and exceed the 1 per cent increase targeted by the CBI for the end of the century.

Richard Needham, the trade minister, launching the strategy in London yesterday, said that if forecasts for world growth were accurate, and Britain returned to the 7 per cent world share of capital goods exports it enjoyed in 1987, it would increase sales from nearly £10 billion in 1990 to £24 billion by 2000.

He said Britain had failed historically to match its competitors in the sophistication of its commercial and industrial infrastructure. "The haphazard development of chambers of commerce, trade associations and professional institutions, has led too often to tunnel vision, professional rivalry and inadequate networking," he said, adding that



"Discounting is here to stay": Graeme Seabrook, left, and Sir Timothy Harford, chairman

Kwik Save unveils reshaped board

By JON ASHWORTH

MONTHS of uncertainty over the future management structure of Kwik Save, Britain's biggest discount chain, ended yesterday with confirmation that Graeme Seabrook is stepping down as chief executive to take up a position in Hong Kong.

He will be succeeded next June by Graeme Bowler, currently managing director of Franklins, a large Australian discount food retailer.

Mr Seabrook has been appointed managing director of Dairy Farm International, which owns Franklins and is Kwik Save's largest shareholder.

News of his departure caps a turbulent year in the boardroom. Simon Moffat resigned as group finance director in May, to join Hillsdown Holdings. He was replaced by Derek Pretty, former finance director of Budgets.

Yesterday, the group announced pre-tax profits of £110.6 million (£101.7 million) for the 52 weeks to August 29. The results compare with the previous 53-week period. Turnover in-

creased to £2.5 billion (£1.9 billion). Earnings per share were 48.21p (44.26p). A final dividend of 11.3p (10.4p) a share makes a total for the year of 16p (14.7p).

The shares slipped from 752p to 740p but recovered to 748p. Kwik Save has decided to open on the two Sundays before Christmas, despite its opposition to Saturday shopping.

Mr Seabrook said: "Discounting is here to stay. Unlike the supermarkets, we sell at the lowest price we can afford rather than the highest price they can get away with."

Financing expansion out of debt rather than through rights issues has resulted in interest costs of £2.5 million. The company has borrowings of £6 million on a balance sheet of £300 million. Kwik Save has a strong presence in the Midlands, Wales and the North West but has no stores in Scotland or East Anglia and a limited presence in the South of England. Expansion is continuing and a new store is opening every week on average.

Marston brews up a 44% increase

By OUR CITY STAFF

MARSTON, Thompson & Everard, the Burton-on-Trent brewer, has announced interim pre-tax profits of £10.7 million, up 44 per cent over the same period last year, despite a market that Michael Hurdle, chairman, described as "tough".

The interim dividend is 1.45p (1.34p). Turnover, at £53.2 million, was nearly 9 per cent up on last time.

However, Mr Hurdle said that the beer market was characterised by "refinement on the part of customers and aggression on the part of competitors".

His comment comes amid suggestions in the trade that as winter sales have fallen steeply in pubs, some brewers are overstocked and face having to shut down brewing for periods of a week or longer.

Mr Hurdle said, however: "These half-year results give me grounds for cautious optimism."

While sales in Marston's tied pubs were down marginally, external sales had more than compensated, he said.

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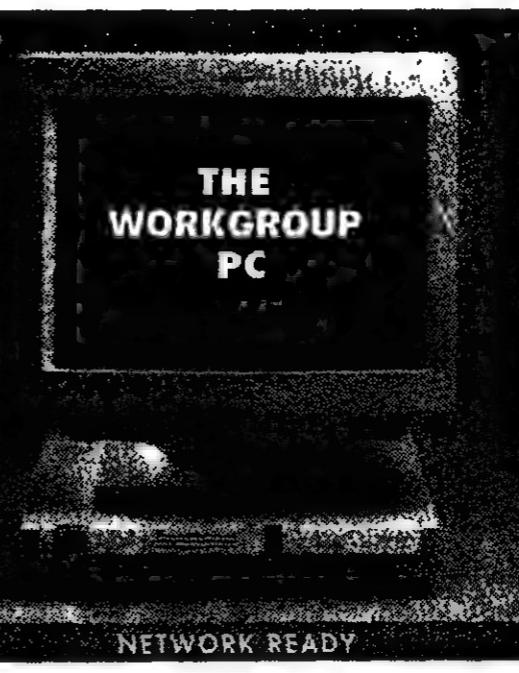
In a nutshell, the LS Pro integrates all the features that other manufacturers only offer as add-in options.

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And by the end of the year, a new piece of software from Microsoft - Windows for Workgroups - will allow as few as two LS Pro computers to be networked together by the simple addition of a cable.

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TEMPOS

Confidence sweetens Tate & Lyle decline

TATE & LYLE has just suffered its first profit setback for 14 years, yet its management has raised the dividend and is full of confidence for the current year.

For an objective view, consider where the money was lost. The results for the year to end-September 1991 were restated downwards by almost £4 million to cover the cost of post-retirement healthcare provisions in America.

Then Tate & Lyle spent £16 million on re-organisation and redundancy, against £6 million last year, and knocked £7 million off the profit and loss account to cope with a write off on Sucralose, the new sweetener. But in turn, the profits benefited from a one-off settlement of £11.5 million from the American tax authorities.

On the trading front, Western Sugar in America, which suffered from bad weather for beet storage, set Tate back £10 million, and Staley, the corn syrup producer, £30 million, compared to last year. Tate is blaming overcapacity, which was compounded by a cold, wet summer in northern America. In fact the third wettest and second coldest on record this century.

Much of the bad news and the good news was already in the price, but prospects for Staley are the key to any valuation of the shares. If Staley stays low, then the City expects £230 million in the current year. If in the next few

North West Water

GIVEN the amount of antipodean lager that has slipped down British throats over the past couple of decades, it would seem high time that the Australians drank some water courtesy of Britain.

North West Water, of which Bob Thian is the chief executive, is to be congratulated on winning two contracts to build and run water treatment plants in Sydney and Melbourne, therefore.

The contracts are a fair boost to the burgeoning but still underperforming process engineering side at North West, although they are dwarfed by the potential of a pending project in Buenos Aires, almost an all-British affair where the company is in competition both with Thames and a consortium that contains An-



Terms of triumph: Bob Thian won contracts in Australia for North West Water

gian. North West's core business continues to show resilience in the face of the recession.

Falling volumes to large industrial consumers are more than balanced by an increasing take-up from smaller businesses.

The scale of cost savings being achieved left a 6 per cent increase in first-half pre-tax profits to £130.7 million, despite interest charges up from £2.4 million to £18.6

million. North West is raising the dividend by a better than expected 9 per cent.

North West is the only one of the ten big water companies to be challenging the regulator over next year's price rises, and this, along with the sudden departure last month of the finance director, has undeniably held back the share.

They now yield 5.9 per cent, barely ahead of the sector average. The omens for

goods interests are finding the going tough. Thanks to higher margins from tobacco, operating profits from leaf businesses rose from £180.1 million to £191.5 million, while operating profits from luxury products inched forward from £20.5 million to £21.8 million.

The group's famous cash mountain — net liquid funds of £897.5 million, equivalent to 140p a share, and up from £770.4 million at end-March — generated less net income, at £21.6 million (£31.1 million), because of lower interest rates to leave group pre-tax profit for the period ended September a whisker ahead at £266.5 million.

Tobacco interests in various of the developed markets are not without their problems though these setbacks are somewhat offset by the fresh opportunities coming Rothmans' way in China and eastern Europe.

The group justifies holding onto its handsome home cash balances of £469.8 million at home and £427.7 million belonging to partly owned subsidiaries by pleasing the need to fund expansion and development.

Meanwhile, the interim dividend is being raised from 3.75p to 4p a share.

Year-end pre-tax profits should rise to £597 million (£652.2 million) to put the shares at 610p, up 12p, on 13.4 times prospective earnings, which is fair rating while the recession rolls on.

STOCK MARKET

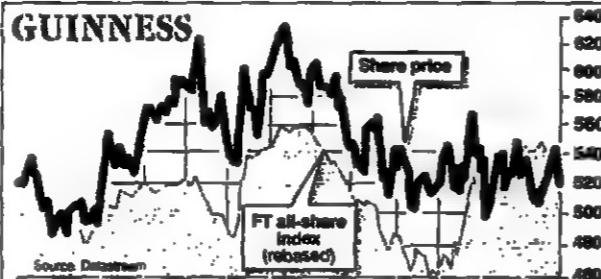
Glaxo slips as rival wins approval to market drug

SHARES in Glaxo fell 20p to 875p after Beecham, one of its biggest rivals, was given approval to market its anti-nausea drug in Europe. Glaxo launched Zofran, used to prevent vomiting and nausea during cancer

treatment, in March 1990, and last year was believed to have achieved sales worth about £259 million in America, Japan and at least eight European countries.

Henderson Crosthwaite is a buyer of ACT, the computer software group, up 7p at 137p. The shares fell 15 per cent last week after interim results. Henderson points out ACT enjoys a prospective p/e of 11.3, with earnings set to grow 11 per cent this year. It also has £17 million of cash.

SmithKline, up 2p at 538p,



expect the European Patent Office to issue a patent for Kytril, its anti-nausea drug, to be issued within the next six months. At present, Kytril is only available intravenously, while Zofran can also be taken in tablet form.

Last night, Glaxo said it would oppose the grant in the patent office and seek to invalidate the patent in any country in which SmithKline sought to enforce it.

Also in the pharmaceutical sector, Fisons closed 10p higher in after-hours trading as it emerged that the group had sold its US and Canadian consumer health businesses to Ciba-Geigy for \$140 million. The business earned \$5.5 million last year and had a book value of \$25 million.

The rest of the equity market was dragged lower by the financial future where Salomon Brothers, the US securities house, was reported to be a big seller. In thin trading, the

FT-SE 100 index closed near its low for the day, down 17.5 at 2,709.6, with investors worried by French threats to veto the agreement reached last week on Gatt world trade tariffs. Turnover was a modest 522 million shares.

Guinness fell 11p to 522p after County NatWest, stockbroker, urged clients to top-sell their holdings. But County believes that the shares will outperform on a long-term basis and says an under-performance of about 8 per

cent would provide investors with a renewed buying opportunity. Trading conditions are expected to be harsher in 1993 and this will be reflected in the group's rating.

Senior Engineering fell 25p to 70p after announcing plans to shed 90 jobs at its north London plant. The move is part of a restructuring programme following the decision to pull out of power generation and the supply of mining equipment. The mining business is for sale.

Pegasus, the USM computer consultancy, fell 42p to 86p after announcing that Jonathan Hubbard-Ford, chief executive, had resigned because of a difference in management style. James Minnott, managing director, said the main aim of the board was to steer the group back to profitability.

Laporte, the chemicals group, fell 22p to 593p after a visit this week by analysts to its new absorbent plant. It says trading remains difficult. Brokers have cut their profit forecasts by £5 million to £85 million. The shares recently benefited from switching out of ICL.

Tiphook, the container and trailer rental group, climbed 12p to 277p helped by the latest surge of American buying.

MICHAEL CLARK

BRITISH FUNDS

GOVERNMENT securities continued to shadow the futures and European bond markets with prices losing ground in the afternoon.

The future led the cash market lower after bond prices on the Continent showed signs of running out of steam. The long gilt future finished the session 13 ticks lower at £100 1/2, as 22,000 contracts were completed.

In spite of another firm performance by the pound on the foreign exchange, investors appeared reluctant to commit themselves. The release this week of details of the £2.5 billion auction of Treasury 8 per cent 2003 continues to absorb what little interest investors can muster.

In longs, Treasury 9 per cent 2008 fell nine ticks to £100 1/2. At the shorter end, Exchequer 94 per cent 1993 dropped £1 to £109 1/2.

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Resolving the power impasse

The European Commission is mounting a serious effort to cut national subsidies to coal producers between 1994 and 1997. It is setting an orientation price to which the more expensive producers should work towards or cease production, based on this year's weighted average production costs. The Commission appears to calculate these at about £88 per tonne. Under the proposed new contracts between British Coal and the electricity industry, British Coal will not be able to sell as much as it wants at about £38 a tonne. That sets the debate about British pits closures in perspective.

All the main interests in the electricity industry have been telling the trade and industry select committee that at least some, probably half, the threatened pits need not close on economic grounds. Their ideas on how this might be done are almost universally self-serving, locked in old arguments designed to preserve their market power and put the blame on others. The distributors say they could sign more contracts for coal-fired power if they retained their monopoly franchise market at its present size and want the privatised generating companies broken up. The big generators want the franchise market reserved for their coal-fired power, so that they can undercut newer higher price gas stations with their own gas stations in an increased competitive sector. Nuclear Electric claims that its old Magnox stations are cheap to run and expensive to close, though that clashes with arguments north of the border. The regulator has nothing to say.

If Michael Heseltine wants a solution rather than an alibi, he will need to knock some heads together and rethink privatisation of British Coal, which is a key element in the debacle. Privatisation strategy was based on maximising profits and minimising risks. British Coal could supply about 10 to 15 million tonnes more than assumed at the new price without making losses on the extra tonnage, but profits on that business might be slim. It could displace most expected imports over the next couple of years by offering coal from its cheapest mines at a significantly lower price. That would, however, slash average profit margins, reduce free cash flow and make the business more risky for investors. This still looks the better option. Maintaining pits is the most sensible way to invest in future capacity, as reserves in other mines are quickly depleted.

Generators can be asked to co-operate on imports, and on maintaining stocks, if they are not to be regulated. Further ahead, when the bulk of new gas stations are due to come into operation, more drastic measures are needed. These are likely to include cancelling some gas contracts, phasing out the more costly Magnox stations and, provided that is done, reducing purchases of French nuclear power.

Western sunrise

America's economic upturn has come too late for President Bush but, if sustained, will be the best economic news for a long time. America may no longer be the locomotive for the world economy, but remains the most important single market. The surprising pace of third-quarter growth will also energise the debate about policy in Britain. As the National Institute emphasises, forecasting what will happen to Britain's economy next year is a game of chance, partly depending on the state of export markets. That uncertainty could easily tempt policymakers into piling on measures to stimulate recovery just to make sure, only to find the brakes have to be applied later. The combination of devaluation and interest rate cuts should provide a sufficiently powerful boost. The longer they take to work, however, the louder will grow the chorus demanding more.

Andrew Buxton shortly becomes chairman as well as chief executive. Neil Bennett does not expect the succession to be smooth

Barclays is a bank under siege. Already hemmed in by a busted flush of property companies that cannot repay their multi-million pound loans and by thousands of small business customers who feel they are getting a raw deal, the bank is being drawn into a third and even more damaging conflict with its own shareholders.

The City's most powerful investors are quietly but firmly telling the bank they do not believe it has the management strength to guide it through the difficult times ahead. The revolt began last April when Barclays announced that Andrew Buxton would succeed Sir John Quinton as chairman and chief executive in January.

The institutions have not only voiced their disquiet to Barclays. They have even written to the Bank of England to complain about the bank's decision to appoint a combined chairman and chief executive.

Mr Buxton has tried to defuse the confrontation by saying that if the task proves too much, the bank will appoint a separate chief executive. By making this concession, he has backed himself into a corner and may well relinquish the chief executive role early next year. But he is adamant he will take up the twin posts in January as planned. Barclays argues that it has always combined the jobs of chairman and chief executive and that Mr Buxton will be supported by a capable team of executives and a large cast of non-executive directors, so that there is no need to split the roles. Shareholders are unconvinced.

If ever Barclays needed strong management it is now. The City believes the bank is heading for its first ever loss this year and will be forced to cut its dividend because of unparalleled bad debt provisions. Barclays de Zone Wedd, the bank's own securities house, suggests that Barclays is £1 billion underprovided against bad loans compared with its peers and forecasts that it will make a £65 million loss this year and reduce its total payout by a third.

A procession of Barclays' largest and most favoured customers have hit the rocks in the past year, including Maxwell Communication Corporation, Mountrath, Olympia & York, developer of Canary Wharf. Elsewhere, the bank is involved in costly rescue operations. As well as managing a battered loan book, Mr Buxton must take an axe to his bank's cost structure. Retail banking in Britain is undergoing an upheaval as the lenders rationalise their payment processing and customer service operations at the cost of tens of thousands of jobs. In the last fortnight, National Westminster and the Royal Bank of Scotland have announced projects to transform



Heir apparent: Sir John Quinton, left, is due to hand over the chairmanship of the bank to chief executive Andrew Buxton in January

their branch network and increase their selling power. Barclays must match them to hold its share of the retail banking market.

Mr Buxton must also stimulate loan and income growth as Britain emerges from recession and cope with any capital shortage caused by low profitability. He should ensure Barclays is well placed in the single European market and that BZW maintains its place in international capital and securities markets without incurring unnecessary risks.

In short, Mr Buxton faces a Herculean task, and institutional investors believe it is too much for one man, any man. "It's a huge job. Barclays' lending has been more imprudent than most; it has always underprovided and it has suffered a lot. Once a company starts to struggle it cannot afford to ignore the recommendations of the Cadbury Report," one leading shareholder said.

Mr Buxton will hold unparalleled responsibility. While Barclays has always combined the roles of chairman and chief executive, the chairman has always been able to rely on a second-in-command, originally tried senior general manager and later managing director.

Mr Buxton was managing director from 1988 until he became chief executive this year, and relieved Sir John of many of the daily pressures of running the bank. Now, however, the post has been scrapped. In its place the bank's operations are controlled by the chief executives of the two main divisions, Alastair Robinson from the retail bank and David Band at BZW. But there is no central figure

to direct group operations apart from Mr Buxton.

In addition to some institutions' opposition in principle to the appointment there is disquiet among many that Mr Buxton is not the man for the job, that he is too heavily involved in the mistakes of the past to be able to make a fresh start.

Whenever Mr Buxton's rapid rise to power at Barclays is discussed, his membership of one of the bank's founding families is sure to be mentioned, perhaps unfairly. The Buxtons owned one of the local banks that were merged in 1894 to form Barclays, and there have been family members in the bank ever since.

Barclays had been cautious in its lending policies, but then became worried that it was being left behind by NatWest, which had overtaken it in profits and balance sheet size.

The bank decided to expand its

way back to the top. The result was a record-breaking £921 million rights issue, which was scheduled for October 1987, but was postponed after the stock market crash. It was shelved again the following February and finally launched in June.

After the cash call, Barclays started lending with a vengeance. Loans ballooned by £16 billion in that year alone, and reached a record £98 billion by the end of 1990.

With hindsight, the eight-month delay of the rights issue may have been critical to the damage the bank's loan book is suffering. By the time the funds were collected the economy was overheating and many of the lending proposals the bank accepted then are those it is paying for so dearly today.

In the first half of this year the bank made record bad debt provisions of £1.07 billion, effectively blowing the entire proceeds of the issue. "I hope none of us forget that rights issue and what it led to," said one institutional Barclays shareholder.

The big question is who, if anyone, Barclays will choose to share Mr. Buxton's burden. Sir Peter Middleton, former permanent secretary at the Treasury and Barclays' deputy chairman, was an obvious choice as chairman and sources close to the bank say he was implicitly offered the chair when he joined last year. But now Mr Buxton has been offered the chairman's job he is unlikely to

relinquish it. In any case, Sir Peter's outspoken criticism of the bank's lack of strategy and decision-making process have raised eyebrows in the City and fuelled stories of boardroom faction-fighting at the bank.

Barclays' search for a chief executive will not be easy. The bank lost many of its best managers to rivals during the mid-eighties, including Malcolm Williamson, now chief executive of Standard Chartered, Peter Ellwood, chief executive of TSB Group, and latterly Brian Pearce, chief executive at Midland.

One of these could be asked to return. They have demonstrated their abilities by tackling banks with complex problems and an external appointment would satisfy the institutions who want to feel the bank can make a fresh start. Of the three, Mr Williamson is the most likely candidate since Mr Ellwood has only recently been promoted and Brian Pearce is 60 next year and may be looking forward to a quiet life.

Alternatively the bank could promote internally. Mr Robinson may well be the board's first choice while Humphrey Norrington, the vice-chairman, is a strong candidate.

Whoever accepts the job will need many skills and the capacity to work long hours to turn Barclays round.

Most of all, he must have a common touch to inspire staff to pull together. Unless Barclays can solve its succession difficulties quickly, morale will continue to wane among staff and shareholders and leave its mark on the profit figures and share price.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Whisky in store for Argyll

ARGYLL and Guinness were rivals yet again yesterday as runners-up in the Barclays Business Enterprise Awards, where it emerged that Argyll has still not quite got over losing Distillers to Guinness. Last year, it cheekily commissioned a 12-year malt and called it "Auld Acrimony" to celebrate winning £100 million damages from Guinness. Now, David Webster, deputy chairman, says Argyll has commissioned a 15-year-old malt, destined for its Safeway chain, to mark the fifteenth anniversary of Argyll's finding. "You could say this second foray into the whisky market indicates we are still suffering some withdrawal symptoms at losing Distillers," quipped Webster, who set up Argyll with James Gulliver, a fellow Scotsman, and Sir Alistair Grant, the chairman, in 1977. The new malt will be called "Argyll" and bear the food group's newly created tartan. "It has to be said we still regret losing Distillers," Webster admitted. "We would have got a lot of enjoyment out of it and would certainly have moved our headquarters to Scotland." Guinness, observers will recall, promised to do just that, but later backed off.

Winning ways

WHILE the Oscars make actors coy about claiming credit, the Barclays Business Enterprise Awards seem to have stressed the relationship between Dorian Nineberg and Simon Cooney, joint man-



Whent winning Vodafone

Driving force

FINANCIERS often go to great lengths in the pursuit of new business, but Philip Kendall's performance will be hard to beat. Kendall, a corporate finance director at Samuel Montagu and budding car enthusiast, has taken part in a grueling 2,000-mile vintage car race across Mexico from Guadalajara to Texas. "We had up to 20,000 villagers coming out to wave us on," says Kendall, who was paired with Christopher Bibb, a former captain in the Coldstream Guards, in a Jaguar XK140, one of two cars sponsored by Montagu. "We await to see what corporate finance business will arise from this trip." Mishaps aside — the car collided with a vulture and crashed into a barrier after a tyre blew up — the pair romped home in eleventh place in a field of 100, narrowly ahead of a GKN-sponsored entry and a car driven by Graham Walker, ex-deputy chairman of Argyll, which happens to be one of Montagu's clients.

Centre stage

CITY thespians take to the boards next week for their annual Christmas break from the woes of the Square Mile. Inspired by the success of their last production, *South Pacific*, the Stock Exchange Dramatic Society has turned to Tom Stoppard's *Or the Razzle* for their latest offering — the 199th in the society's 87-year history. The Serious Fraud Of-

Due credit

From Mr Stephen Gratton

Sir, It would appear that a significant number of businesses fail because their customers do not pay their bills within agreed credit periods. Unfortunately, legislation to force prompt settlement of accounts appears some way off, so why not a tax regime that encourages prompt payment, albeit only once a year at the business year end?

In computing business profits for tax purposes why not disallow expenses which are not paid within an agreed credit period, to be approximated by some calculation of say an average credit allowed of 45 days. Everything owed after that would only be allowed in the following accounting year when paid.

Yours faithfully,

STEPHEN GRATTON,

10 Hoker Road,

Heavitree, Exeter.

Reform of personal taxation and meeting Revenue demands

From Mr Alan Allsopp

Sir, In commenting on the 1986 green paper on reforms of personal taxation Anna Lines observes that the government "inexplicably failed to implement the proposed reform" (November 19).

May I say that the Treasury explained to me quite clearly why they did not do so.

They maintained that insufficient people had written supporting the proposals and that therefore they did not feel justified in implementing them.

I inferred from this "explanation" that folk didn't want their tax reduced, would bitterly resent it and would riot in the streets if tax reduction were wantonly visited upon them.

However, leaving to one side the Treasury's irrefutable logic, may I point out how

much single people stand to lose under the government's failure to reform personal taxation once the council tax is introduced?

Many of them are women

on very poor incomes indeed.

The 1986 proposals would have made them £215 better off to face the new tax.

Yours faithfully,

ALAN ALLSOPP,

A.H. Allsopp Guidelines,

78 Ewell Road,

Hall Green,

Birmingham,

West Midlands.

From Mr Michael Abbott

Sir, I never thought that I would write in support of taxation but Mr A.G. Hebron's letter (November 24) suggesting the cessation of preference for Crown taxation, makes me do so.

Taxes are levied on the basis

of a high yield of payment and

if this does not happen, it sets off a spiral of increased taxation.

A small business can elect to pay value added tax on cash flow if it wishes, and many firms actually make a notional profit before the due date for payment.

Pay as you earn is a deduction from wages and salaries and when deducted it is the property of the Crown and should be paid on due date — the money should not be used for other purposes.

Yours faithfully,

MICHAEL ABBOTT,

56 Tot Hill Street,

Minster,

Kent.

Letters to the Business

and Finance section

of The Times can

be sent by fax

on 071-782 5112.

The cost of running a foreign account

From Joan Salter

Sir, Like Mrs P. Van Rappard (November 20), I have a dollar income and have tried every way to minimise exchange charges. Unfortunately, if the Canadian banks charge the same as those in the US, then Mr Hutchings's suggestion (November 24) of opening an account over there, together with a Visa card, is not a cheap option. My US Visa card has a set annual fee of \$17.00. In addition, the bank imposes a monthly charge on my cheque account of \$7.25, if the balance drops below \$1,200. The final irony, these charges are not tax deductible, so I pay tax on income I never receive. It appears that banks on both sides of the Atlantic as well as the Inland Revenue think of us as fools.

Yours faithfully,

JOAN SALTER,

64 Church Crescent, N10.

Spirits flagging

From Joachim Sander

Sir, I have been looking forward to the correct printing of my country's national flag in The Times. I was taken by surprise when I saw the version of the German flag (November 17). This time, you avoided the mistake of inverted printing, but have the order of colours (black, yellow, red instead of black, red, gold) rather mixed up. This bears more resemblance to the flag of Uganda than Germany's.

I am now looking forward to seeing the Belgian flag in due course as a renewed attempt of printing Germany's national flag correctly.

Flagging yours,

JOACHIM SANDER,

29 Stoneygate Court,

London Road, Leicester.

ACCOUNTANCY

Graham Searjeant and Robert Bruce on the APB green paper

Warm welcome to reform

By GRAHAM SEARJEANT

THE welcome accorded to *The Future Development of Auditing*, this week's green paper from the Auditing Practices Board, is as remarkable, on the surface, as its contents. Rarely can such a heavily critical and revolutionary agenda for reform have been greeted with such instant enthusiasm by any profession.

Ian Plastow, president of the ICAEW, saw the paper as a powerful stimulus to debate among all parties. Brandon Gough, senior partner of Coopers & Lybrand, said: "We are very pleased with what they have come out with. This is what people want". John Magill, national accounting director at Touche Ross, said: "The outcome of the debate raised by this excellent paper will set the course of auditing for the next ten years".

There is some hard common sense behind this welcome, as well as natural relief that the APB has produced something so positive, and which could rebuild auditors' self-esteem. Audit reform could be the best thing that has happened to the business of big accountancy firms since information technology.

Audit partners have long been fed up with being the



Bill Morrison, chairman of the Auditing Practices Board, and Citibank's John McFarlane

unregarded providers of basic income to cover the overheads, but are locked into a cycle of price competition that has made the statutory audit of big companies' accounts more form than substance. So long as the finance director is the customer, this is what the customer wants.

Recession exposed that weakness by prickling the bubble in consultancy and corporate finance work. Expanding audit, in ways that add much more value to the service, could provide a stabler basis for the next phase of growth. Some audit bills could double.

Apart from expanding conventional audit to other public financial announcements, the APB's proposals embrace the Cadbury committee's call for auditors to vet compliance with a code of corporate governance and internal risk management controls. They anticipate calls for new items in financial reports, and, at least in principle, greater responsibility to third parties, such as regulators, on anything from criminality to environmental performance.

The APB builds on earlier concessions obliging auditors to judge companies' financial viability, taking them into

murky areas such as vulnerability to risk and even the style of management. The protective veil of the Caparo judgement is cast gallantly aside. Demands of Austin Mitchell and his academic advisers are taken on board.

Not long ago, such thoughts would have horrified the average auditor. However, John

While some of the new

responsibilities would be daunting, therefore, the downside is modest. The profession's leaders have enough confidence in Bill Morrison, the APB's canny chairman, to embrace the concept of compulsory rotation of audit firms, as well as partners, in return for multi-year audit contracts. This was dismissed as hazy two years ago. The APB is trying to retain, within tighter limits, the commercially important freedom to offer other services to audit clients.

David Lindsell of Ernst & Young offers a useful antidote to euphoria. Such reforms could take many years to become reality, during which they could widen the expectations gap. The DTI is not keen

to take a lead or legislate, as the Cadbury committee realised.

The CBI will hate both the cost and curbs on the power of the unitary board. Mr Morrison will need to mobilise a powerful lobby, including the institutes, to have any hope of turning ideas into reality.

PROBABLY the most important paragraph in the revolutionary McFarlane report, *The Future Development of Auditing*, is number 4.2. It should be read by anyone involved in the increasingly tangled world of corporate governance, for it sets out what everyone knows but promptly forgets. It says: "There is a need to restore the basic principle reflected in company law: auditors are appointed by the shareholders, not the directors... auditors' responsibility is to the shareholder group".

For auditors, and indeed most of the business world, this is seen as a polite fiction. Finance directors really appoint auditors. The traditional reappointment at a sparsely attended annual meeting is a stage-managed farce that has nothing to do with supposedly fierce audit independence and truth in financial reporting. "And who will propose the auditors?", boomed a chairman at an AGM I went along to last week. There was a lengthy silence, then an embarrassed shareholder popped up hesitantly. "Oh dear", he said. "I thought I was seconding it." That is the level to which the contract between auditors and shareholders has sunk. But the McFarlane report's reverberation through the corporate world, which knows that change has to come, will be profound. For one thing, audit firms themselves are heavily criticised. The same paragraph 4.2 gets to the heart of more confusion, noting: "The colloquial use of the word client by auditors when referring to the company conveys the wrong relationship and adds to confusion as to the role of audit". This should throw auditor terminology into a lengthy period of re-examination.

On the evening after the report's publication, senior partners in one firm talked of political correctness finally reaching the world of audit. They had missed the point. Much of the trouble that auditors have had in recent years stems from such misunderstanding. By allowing directors to take advantage of the fiction that they, rather than shareholders, call the shots, auditors have lost the position of obdurate independence they need, in order to maintain their role. As a result, during a decade of corporate expansion and dubious accounting, they found themselves with no option other than flight. When accounting standards were first introduced there was a flurry of audit qualifications through the late 1970s. When it became obvious that no one

outside the profession was going to enforce them, companies simply ignored them. Auditors, as the head of the English ICA's auditing committee pointed out this week, had no option than to stop qualifying accounts. The results, as we now realise, were disastrous. A generation grew up which serviced rather than criticised the people they erroneously called clients. The real danger, as the report says, "is a question of the attitude of mind maintained by those involved in the audit".

That attitude of mind needs to be changed by a radically changed understanding of the principles. How many of those happily servicing their clients are, in the words of one of the report's list of enduring principles of auditing, "maintaining a stance of professional scepticism in their assessment of evidence"? In large audit firms there is certainly more to do with cynicism than a recognition that the firm could act to modify the behaviour.

The other side of all this change is to ensure that shareholders start to take the solid stance which would make it work. It is all very well to call for a triangular structure where directors are clearly responsible for what goes on within a company, auditors rigorously check that out and shareholders crack the whip, but huge changes are needed to make it work. Shareholders, particularly institutional ones, have been reluctant to use their muscle in public. Now is the time to change. The report has many useful proposals and, unlike the forthcoming Cadbury report on corporate governance, does not shy of legislation to bring about change.

The proposals also show that, with a heavy involvement of non-practitioners, a radical report which demands action can be produced. We have moved away from when the centre of the profession dismissed well-meaning reports which they knew no one would ever act upon. The downside is that its ideological structure becomes ever more obvious as a result. "The public becomes confused at the labyrinth of other bodies", said one non-practitioner on the working party. And if it lends credence to one of the other ideas of the report—to create a single overarching body for audit governance".

The author is Associate Editor of Accountancy Age

What we all know but promptly forget

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Andrew Sansom of ACCA dies

ANDREW Sansom, secretary of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants for many years, died last week while on his way to an opera performance in London. Mr Sansom, 55, joined ACCA in 1974 as administration secretary and was well known in accountancy circles. "It was a great shock," says David Bishop, ACCA president, who joins mourners at a memorial service tomorrow. Mr Sansom spent 11 years abroad with the colonial audit service in Tan-

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Financial Implications, written by Michael Renger, a partner of Nabarro Nathanson, the law firm, and published by Accountancy Books. "There has been a great deal of speculation about the impact of environmental law upon UK businesses," says Renger. "We felt very strongly that there was a real demand for a practical, hands-on guide that tells directors where, when and how to start." The book costs £25. More details are available on (0908) 668833.

JON ASHWORTH

China disaster

THIS report from China is no joke. In Maoshan village, in the eastern Anhui province, seven people were killed and 19 injured when an account accidentally ignited 1,138 cases of firecrackers at a fireworks factory.

THANKS to Sanjay Jawa, of Barclays de Zoete Wedd Investment Management, for this thought: Why did the auditor cross the road? Because he did it last year.

JON ASHWORTH

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THEATRE page 30

Tony Haygarth makes a bluff, roly-poly Macbeth for the English Shakespeare Company

ARTS

LITERATURE page 31

Alice Walker, author of *The Color Purple*, typifies a new breed of book-club writers



CINEMA: Geoff Brown welcomes a strongly acted new film version of John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*

Heroes who turn up in unlikely places

In California, two itinerant labourers struggle to get by during the Depression. One, Lennie, is a gentle man with a child's mind and a ferocious strength he finds hard to control; the other, George, acts as his parent and protector, sometimes grudgingly, mostly with pride. Working hard on a ranch, harassed by Curley, the boss's son, they dream of peaceful, better times running their own farm. Lennie will feed the rabbits: "Tell me about the rabbits," he asks repeatedly. But George has a darker future in store.

The world knows the story, of course. John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men* has been successfully dramatised, widely translated, and transformed into a 1939 Hollywood classic with Lon Chaney Jr., Burgess Meredith and a magnificent Copland score. But it bears retelling in sensitive hands, for Steinbeck's tale has the resonance of myth. *Of Mice and Men* recalls the need for friendship and dreams to combat hardship, and the danger of unprotected innocence.

The casting in Gary Sinise's impressive film may cause agulp. John Malkovich is known on screen for his wily intelligence yet here the seducer of *Dangerous Liaisons* stands with slightly crossed eyes, mouth agape, chunky with extra weight, struggling to grasp the simplest things. He first played Lennie in 1980 for Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company, which Sinise co-founded when only 18 years old. Compared to Chaney's exuberant portrayal in Lewis Milestone's film, Malkovich is far cagier: this Lennie knows about artful pauses and Method acting. Yet his technique never obscures upon the film's emotions.

Sinise himself, a theatrical talent now spreading his wings into cinema, takes good care of George, as he did on stage. His is a worried, hard-bitten face, ideal for a taciturn loner worn down by life but still clutching at hope. In direction, too, Sinise favours a few, spare gestures: the incident with Candy's old dog, shot off-screen, is particularly poignant, partly thanks to Ray Watson's affecting turn as Candy, the wizened ranch hand.

Most young moviegoers, however, expect something stronger or kinder than a lumbering simple-

Of Mice and Men (Curzon West End, PG)
Blade Runner (MGM Shaftesbury Avenue, 15)
The Waterdance (Plaza, MGM Trocadero, 15)

ton dreaming of rabbits and the death of a four-legged friend. Sinise does at least offer the alluring Sherilyn Fenn (from *Twin Peaks*) in the enhanced role of Curley's frustrated, come-hither wife. Otherwise, Horton Foote's script springs few surprises: the story unfolds as it always has, though this time Miles' soundstage interiors are largely replaced by dusty locations, wonderfully filmed in hot, golden colours by British cameraman Kenneth MacMillan. Given Stein-

beck's great story, a memorable cast and a caring director, there is no need for fancy tricks. This is a solid, moving achievement, and a film that will live.

Blade Runner has already earned its niche in history. For better or worse — to my mind the latter — Ridley Scott's 1982 epic set in motion fantasy cinema's current obsession with chokingly dense visual effects, scanty or bewildering plots, marauding mutants and all-pervasive black.

Ten years on, in this new "director's cut", the work of Scott's design team remains impressive. No science-fiction city since *Metropolis* has looked so awesome as this Los Angeles of 2019, with its encrusted pyramids of industrial might, towers belching acrid fire, huge video screens and neon advertising loom through foul brown air and rain-swept streets. But we pay a high price for the film's design fetish. Despite the wicked grin of Rutger Hauer's rebel android, far more frightening than the weary hero in pursuit, this is a monotonous tale, its dramatic life choked by visual artifice.

When first released after nervous studio tinkering, two points grazed

with critics and public. Harrison Ford's hard-boiled narration jarred; while the film collapsed in the home stretch with a contrived happy ending for Ford, the android hunter, and Sean Young, the sinuous android dressed in Forties' high style. The present version, based on Scott's original cut, removes both bights. The thriller plot now chugs along unimpeded, and the end is bleaker. Along the way some scenes get tightened, others, particularly those with Ford and Young, lengthened.

Blade Runner Mark Two is undoubtedly a better film, one no science-fiction devotee should miss. But it still seems a dangerous classic: arid, monumental, a doleful signpost to a decade of films drenched in black smoke and rain, of cartwheeling mutants and cyberpunk gadgetry, a decade when high technology won and the human heart lost.

Yet hope springs eternal, for in *The Waterdance* the heart fights back. We are in a hospital's rehabilitation ward; our hero, a promising writer, lies flat on his back, slowly recovering from a broken neck, his head fixed in position by some medical variant of a crown of thorns. His fellow patients are all paraplegics: a burly redneck biker who spits out racist abuse, a fast-talking philanderer, and, in a private room, a spinal and brain cancer victim who can only manage groans and shouts.

Many other hospital movies have tried to celebrate the human spirit, only to fall into schematic writing and emotional bullying. Neal Jimenez's first film, co-directed with Michael Steinberg, never completely avoids these pitfalls, but there is a lightness and candour here that

lifts *The Waterdance* well clear of similar films such as *The Men*.

The title is plucked from one of the script's few fancy patches. Wesley Snipes (the philanderer, Raymond) dreams he is dancing on water; if he stops he drowns, so he must keep dancing. Luckily for us, Jiminez — best-known for his disturbing script for *River's Edge* — finds many better ways to observe the human spirit's tenacity.

And he had no need for research. In 1984 Jiminez suffered a hiking accident (like Eric Stoltz's hero), and is now confined to a wheelchair. If he escapes such as the patients' jaunt in a purloined van seem far-fetched, the obsession with virility definitely strikes home. How can a paraplegic enjoy sexual intercourse? *The Waterdance*, courageously, faces the question.

Performances are crucial to the film's success. Stoltz, no stranger to medical problems after suffering a disfiguring disease in Bogdanovich's *Mask*, keeps self-pity at bay as the laconic Joel whose good humour hides mounting despair, and who feels himself drifting from his married girlfriend (Helen Hunt). Snipes gives a showy turn as the gibb ladies' man Raymond; though the most memorable patient is William Forsythe's Blos, the mother's-boy biker forced to confront his own prejudices.

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The supporting short was an eight-minute wonder from the now half-paralysed Antonioni, a symbolic travelogue of Sicilian marvels. *Noto Mandorli Vulcano Stromboli Caravale*.

Antonioni began in documentaries; his first, indeed, was about the Po. Pominantly, the wheel has come full circle.



Of Mice and Men: Lennie (John Malkovich) is a gentle man with a child's mind and a ferocious strength he finds hard to control; George (Gary Sinise) acts as his parent and protector

Losing a war but winning a battle

Philip Kemp reveals the bizarre history behind a classic film from the Thirties, which receives a rare screening next week



John Loder, "a stolid figure", and Merle Oberon at the outset of her career, in *The Battle*

In July 1933, a young British screenwriter, Robert Stevenson, arrived at the Billancourt film studios near Paris, assigned to a prestigious new French production as "English dialogue director". The reason for this was that the film in question, *The Battle* (*La Bataille*), was being shot in French and English at once — a common practice at the time. To reach more markets, producers would make films in multiple versions with a different set of actors for each language. Some movies were shot in seven simultaneous versions.

Stevenson later had a long directorial career that led from *King Solomon's Mines* through *Jane Eyre* (with Orson Welles) to *Mary Poppins*, but in 1933 he was still a writer, seconded from the Gaumont-British studios at Lime Grove. His assignment must have seemed straightforward. But the film's title, he soon discovered, was singularly apt. As the shoot founders, he sent informal reports back to his boss at Gaumont, Michael Balcon, in letters that have recently come to light.

La Bataille was a rip-roaring exotic melodrama, set in Japan during the Russo-Japanese War. A naval hero, Marquis Yorisaka, suspects his wife of intimacy with a visiting British naval officer. With expertise purloined from the Englishman, Yorisaka routs the enemy in a great sea battle. But his honour has been tainted by the suspected affair, and as victory celebrations erupt he commits hara-kiri.

The film's producer, Léon Garganoff, was an Armenian immigrant venturing into production with his newly-formed company, Lianofilm. "It's his ambition," Stevenson reported, "to make a great French film out of gratitude to France who accepted him as an exile and enabled him to make a fortune out of film stock."

"He has got Nicolas Farkas, the most expensive cameraman in France; Bernard Zimmer, the most expensive scenario writer; and Charles Boyer and Annabella, two of the three most expensive French stars — and is rapidly losing all the fortune he made in France." Lianofilm had sent Farkas to Japan for authentic costumes and artefacts, enlisted the French navy for spectacular battle scenes of *Toussaint*, and were building elaborate sets at Billancourt.

The British cast included Merle Oberon, at the outset of her career, and John Loder, a stolid figure best remembered as the undercover cop in Hitchcock's *Sabotage*. "Merle Oberon has been sold to them by the astute Korda as a big English star," noted Stevenson dryly, "and they have engaged Loder for a difficult acting part under the impression that he is an actor."

Garganoff's unluckiest move was his choice of director. Victor Tourjansky had quite a reputation: director of acclaimed films in pre-Revolutionary Russia and later in France, First Assistant to Abel Gance on the monumental *Napoléon*. But he proved a disaster on *La Bataille*, insisting on an unspeakable script and alienating cast and

crew with his intransigent behaviour.

"The more I see of foreign film studios," Stevenson wrote to Balcon, "the more I wonder why I ever leave London. For the first three days we did no work as the cameraman had lost his camera."

On the fourth the assistant director pushed the director into a pond. Tourjansky has already been sacked three times but blankly refuses to go.

Perhaps angling for a rapid return to London, Stevenson suggested Garganoff cut his losses and drop the English-language version. But the producer wanted an international hit — and that meant the American market.

"It also consumed all the clothes, uniforms and three sets, and all the properties from Japan. The nega-

tive of the two days with Farkas, our only good days, hadn't been put in the vaults, and was ruined by fire hoses."

While Stevenson and Zimmer rewrote the script once more, the production decamped to the Javelin studios on the far side of Paris. Sets were rebuilt, local sources scoured for props and costumes, and shooting again restarted. With Farkas in charge things were smoother, but Tourjansky's malign influence still made itself felt.

Stevenson wrote: "Half the unit believe Tourjansky burnt down the studios himself. I am assured by everyone I meet that this is the most efficient unit in France, so I dare not think what the others are like."

*S*hooting was further delayed when Merle Oberon, after a drenching with sea-spray, developed influenza. But against all the odds, hopelessly behind schedule, *La Bataille* was finally completed in mid-October — and turned out to be a fine film, a hit with public and reviewers alike. Boyer (who played in both French and English) was praised for his portrayal of a man trapped by a constricting moral code, and the battle scenes, unprecedented in their authenticity, aroused huge excitement. In America, where it was retitled *Thunder in the East*, reviews verged on the ecstatic.

Indeed for many of those concerned *La Bataille* was a lucky film. It clinched Boyer's reputation in Hollywood, and boosted Oberon's career: she soon became Korda's top female star (and his wife). Back at Gaumont, Stevenson got his first film as director. Farkas directed several more films before immigrating to America, where he developed photographic techniques for the US Navy. Even Tourjansky prospered, directing all over Europe before settling in Germany to make propaganda films for the Nazis.

Direction was taken over by Farkas, who began re-shooting from scratch. Stevenson and Bernard Zimmer were sent off to devise a fresh script. "This we did in four days. Unfortunately, we only worked in French and had only one copy of the new script — which was lost in the fire which burnt down the studios the day we arrived back."

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Lustre and lucre to the other Arthurian legend

FOR all the music-lovers who believe Arturo Toscanini to have been the greatest conductor of the 20th century, here is the ultimate Christmas present: RCA Victor has released "The Complete Toscanini Edition", a monster collection of no fewer than 82 compact discs. The company claims it as the biggest "digital remastering" project ever, and it has been supervised by Jack Pfeiffer, who joined RCA in 1949 and worked with the fiery Italian maestro. The collection will sell for

The NAB, which supports five county theatre companies and a wide range of project companies, promises that all present drama clients will be supported until the end of March 1994, and, perhaps as consolation, that it would support more work aimed at "young people".

Well Met

FRANKFURT, unlovely centre of the German business world, is preparing a cultural bonanza for 1994, the year in which it celebrates its 1,200th anniversary. Among the events announced so far, the highlight will probably be a visit by the Metropolitan Opera of New York, which will take over the lavishly reconstructed Alte Oper for a four-day programme of performances in May 1994. James Levine, the Met's artistic director, will conduct the season.

Last chance . . .

DRAMATICALLY and musically the densest, most complex of the Strauss/Hofmannsthal collaborations, *Die Frau ohne Schatten* is rarely staged successfully. Too often narrative is sacrificed to symbolism, and lushness obscures the score's essential delicacy. Covent Garden, however, in one of its best new productions for some time, has got things just about right: Bernard Haitink conducts with thoughtful authority, and there are vividly affecting performances. John Cox's staging is clear, efficient and assured. Only David Hockney's sets disappoint. Last performance is at the Royal Opera House (071-240 1066) tomorrow.

ARTS BRIEFING

around £650, and Pfeiffer — who was also the recording producer for Heifetz, Horowitz, Rubinstein and Stokowski — will be talking about it at the Brindley Theatre, Royal College of Music next Thursday at 8pm.

● THE Northern Arts Board has commissioned and accepted a tentative policy a new report on the future of drama in the region which recommends that fewer companies be supported and a new method of funding introduced. The report, a bit like a Green Paper, decides that "funds are being spread too thinly". Under the new "franchise funding" a limited number of arts groups would receive support over a period of between two and five years, and awards would be made for special projects.

extended until 9 January

Three birds alighting on a field

Tim Blake Nelson's

wholeheartedly recommended

ROYAL COURT THEATRE

Harriet Walter's

magnificent and

moving performance

is perfect

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متحف الأصل

LONDON

HAY FEVER: Maria Aitken and John Standing bewilder the weekend guests in Coward's excellent comedy.

BOW PROWLING: Harrison Birtwistle's grandiose music theatre piece, to a text by Tony Harrison based on an ancient ballad about two sisters in love with the same man, is presented in a new production by Graham Devlin. The programme includes the first European performances of his opera *The Story of Deukalion* by the Australian-based composer Andrew Ford. Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, SE1 (071-922 8800), 7.30pm.

MECKLENBURG OPERA: The company presents the one-act chamber opera *Pentimenti* by the Czechoslovak composer Jindřich Štěpánek, written in 1947, set in a small Bohemian town near České Budějovice. The opera tells the story of a young man and his friend who, surrounded by spies and informers, give in to an atmosphere of meastur.

THE KOSHT: This acrobatic dance troupe celebrates its tenth anniversary with a new version of its *Entangled* Spectac, a work co-directed, co-choreographed and inspired by the life of victim circus performer and vaudevillian. It's a very double act, struggling to maintain its professional and personal, saxy.

TRIANGLE THEATRE: Arnold Ridley's classic comedy-thriller set in a Corinthian hall.

THE GHOST TRAIN: Arnold Ridley's classic comedy-thriller set in a Corinthian hall.

TODAY'S EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kari Knight

NETHER STATION ONE DANCE AND MARCHING QUADRILLE: A new show of duets and marches, inspired by the Arts Council's *Woolly Wonders*, celebrating the lives of some who have died.

KING'S HEAD: 115 Upper Street, N1 (071-226 2196). Tues-Sat, 8pm, mat. Sun, 3.30pm.

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ELIGIES FOR ANGELS, PUNKS AND RAGING QUEENS: A new show of duets and marches, inspired by the Arts Council's *Woolly Wonders*, celebrating the lives of some who have died.

NORWICH: East Anglia has always had the advantage of being so near to sea and yet so far from the coast. One of the reasons for this is the fact that the local gentry had easy access to the latest from London and often held on to it longer. The remarkable survey of regional portraiture, *Reel Folk: Portraits*, ranges in time and style from the Tudor to the Victorian and is subtitled *from royalty to commoners, prime ministers to fishermen*. Examples of painter's such as Van Dyck, Ley and Sargent as well as the home-grown Hogarth and Gainsborough are included.

BLACKPOOL: The Ramble Dome's autumn tour of the Midlands offers two separate programmes. Programme one includes the company promises of Mark Baldwin's *One*, described as a "drama of love and loss".

SHREFFIELD: With the group's *Suns* album seemingly a permanent fixture in the charts, the silky-voiced Mick Hucknall takes his soul group Simply Red out on the road for an extended tour of the UK. Tickets: 0742 566666, tonight, tomorrow, 7pm.

REGIONAL: The Rembrandt Dance Company's autumn tour of the Midlands offers two separate programmes. Programme one includes the company promises of Mark Baldwin's *One*, described as a "drama of love and loss".

BLACKPOOL: The Ramble Dome's autumn tour of the Midlands offers two separate programmes. Programme one includes the company promises of Mark Baldwin's *One*, described as a "drama of love and loss".

WIGAN: Adam Penman's two brothers (played by real-life brothers) have become bitter enemies over the other's

THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale laments a certain lack of menace in an otherwise enjoyable production of *West Side Story*

Leicester's city motto must have been invented by a chronically depressed alderman on getting up one rainy morning and looking out of his window at all that red brick. It is, I believe, a numbing "semper eadem" or "always the same". Yet in one respect it is the friskiest town in the land. It has a theatre which stages lavish revivals of big musicals more frequently than any other, in or out of London: among others, *Chicago*, *The King and I*, *Cabaret*, *High Society*, *Me and My Girl* and *Oklahoma!*. At the Haymarket "semper eadem" means always a good show around Christmas.

So it proves this year. It could be objected that an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* set in Hell's Kitchen is as Christmassy a prospect as the musical version of *Lear* that its librettist, Stephen Sondheim, will doubtless concoct for us before long. But if *West Side Story* is not seasonal, it is certainly topical. "Immigrant scum", "spic", "wops", "get back where you came from", "they move in right under our noses and take it all away from us": it might be another friendly Friday night in downtown Rostock.

Actually, that unavoidable parallel creates problems for a director. The murders

There's a place for us (in Leicester)



The crew could be tougher and the production rougher: Some of the cast of Paul Kerrison's staging would not survive on the streets of New York

does not stint on the scene in which Anita bravely crosses the cultural divide to bring the besieged Tony a message from his love, Maria. If Don, alias Friar Lawrence, had delayed his entrance another minute, gang-rape would have been her fate.

Yet at other times both whites and Hispanics seem less menacing than they might. There are exceptions: Kieran Daniel's boorish, angry Action; Nick Ferranti, who plays Bernardo, the leader of the Sharks, with venomous grace. But I can imagine a tougher crew and a rougher production. I know that the period is the Fifties. I also know that for all its creators' daring, this is still a Broadway show, not a piece of agitprop by Brecht or Bond. But there are boys on that Leicester stage who would not survive ten minutes in a primary school in today's Bronx.

In the event, the Sharks come across more powerfully than the Jets. They dance with more concentrated verve and their

Puerto Rican accents are at least as penetrable as the rather poor American ones of their foes. Thanks to weak delivery, or bad mixing, or a wrong balance between orchestra and singers, it is hard to follow the famous song in which the Jets ironically claim to be deprived because they are deprived. As for the principals - well, Caroline O'Connor's fierce, feisty Anita is more memorable than either Paulette Ivory's gentle Maria or Paul Manuel's wispy Tony. It is true that she has the livelier part, but they are surprisingly lacking in sexual electricity or emotional rapport.

Never mind. It is still an evening worth coming from Nottingham, Sheffield, Leeds or London to enjoy. Whatever the qualifications, how beautifully judged the young Sondheim's lyrics are, and what a marvel Leonard Bernstein's score remains. Imagine a musical nowadays with anything to match "(I Want to be in) America", "Maria", "Somewhere (There's a Place for Us)", let alone all three plus four or five others scarcely less memorable. No, I can't either.

• *West Side Story* is at the Haymarket Theatre, Leicester (0533 539797) until Jan 23

Readers upgrade to club class

LITERATURE: Book clubs are now offering their members the best in new fiction. Harry Eyres reports

Most literary folk, I suspect, would no sooner admit to being members of a book club than to taking their annual holiday at Butlin's. My own image of books clubs was formed early on, by horrifying episodes of Esther Rantzen's consumer watchdog programme, *That's Life*. Book clubs were shady organisations that lured unwary punters with a tempting offer of five classics in gold-tooled imitation leather for £50, into an unbreakable commitment to buy jollyloads of coffee-table books on Armour Through The Ages or the Big Cars of Tanganyika: the same punters, then unable to pay for the postage to return these unwanted tomes, were faced with hatchet-faced repossession men on the doorstep. Only at the eleventh hour were they saved by one of Esther's fearsome young acolytes.

This picture is not entirely untrue. The average book club member, says John Roberts of Book Club Associates (BCA), the country's largest group of book clubs, is "probably not the sort of person who spends much time in bookshops". Middle-of-the-road fiction (Wilbur Smith, Jeffrey Archer) and non-fiction leaning towards gardens and kitchens are the mainsaws. An important market is served by specialist book clubs (historical, military, sci-fi).

But how about a book club which offers the new Jeanette Winterson and the new Rose Tremain in soft covers only a couple of months after their hardback publication, and discounts off Gabriel García Márquez in Penguin? Or another to which you can belong without any commitment to buy a book?

A quiet, softback revolution has been occurring in the book club world over the last couple of years; here is a development which seems to offer publishers and authors access to a previously untapped market of serious book readers, who happen not to be bookshop browsers.

The impetus behind these moves has come from America. Time-Warner has been running the Quality Paperback Bookclub for 17 years in the United States and membership now stands at around one million. Not so surprising, then, that Time-Warner should decide to set up a



A quiet revolution has occurred in the book club world: members are now offered the latest works by such writers as (clockwise from top left) Jeanette Winterson, Rose Tremain, Paul Theroux and Malcolm Bradbury

and Malcolm Bradbury as well as Robert Harris's *Fatherland* and Barry Norman's *100 Best Films*. The biggest difference from TSP may be a technical one: members must buy one book from each of QPD's six annual offers.

Neither Holifield nor Roberts is prepared to release membership figures; both, however, declare themselves well pleased with their progress after two years: "We are certainly meeting our projected targets," says Holifield. Adds Roberts, "we would probably be doing even better if we were not for the recession, but this is a successful growing business."

The latest recruit to the quality paperback book club market has a reputation for

being one of the most innovative thinkers in publishing, Bill Buford of *Granta*. The biggest difference from TSP may be a way of selling *Granta*'s own books to the magazine's 60,000-80,000 subscribers.

"We know exactly who our subscribers are: they are highly intelligent and they buy books. It just seems obvious to offer them the kind of books they want to buy anyway, at a reduced price."

The *Granta* Bookclub, like TSP, involves members in no obligation to buy any books at all; however, there is a fairly hefty catch, in that to join the *Granta* Bookclub you need to be a subscriber either to *Granta* itself or to the *New York Review of Books*. The

restricted range of books - all at present from *Granta*'s own list - may widen if the club gets a favourable response from *Granta* subscribers.

Meanwhile, some elements of the retail book trade, notably John Hitchin of Phoenix Bookshop, president of the Booksellers' Association, strongly resent the change of rules by the Publishers Association which enabled clubs like TSP to operate a "no obligation system". As Martin Goff of the Book Trust points out, "book clubs bring in new readers who are then more likely to buy books at bookshops." They also bring down unit costs on publishers' print runs, add to authors' royalties and make books cheaper for us.

TELEVISION REVIEW: P.D. James is a more complex character than last night's BBC 2 profile suggested

Conviction, but no evidence

The woman on the Tube resembles the headmistress of a rather decent girls' school and wears the expression of one who may be trying to remember the words of a hymn for morning assembly. More likely she is plotting murder, and murder in detail, at that: the blood spurs this

way and splashes that way and trickles in this direction across dead but still warm flesh.

Not just any tube.

P.D. James travels carefully in London, as if to avoid incur-

ring a plot development from one of her own books. She avoids Tube stations that have life in favour of those that have escalators. She walks on the lit side of streets. She has seen the statistics and they mean that crime is getting worse. This is a moot point, for in fact crime has become more reported without necessarily being more committed. Still, P.D. James is at heart pessimistic.

Bookmark (BBC 2) gave itself over last night to our foremost woman writer of crime stories. The introduction said that she had taken the genre "closer to high art than any other living practitioner". Possibly, though this bland profile offered no evidence either way, but from *Cover Her Face* 30 years ago, a classic story of English rural murder, to the new and very different *The Children of Men*, Phyllis James has produced a remarkably consistent body of work consistently

nine, being scolded by her mother: "You're so cynical!"

If cynicism in childhood is defined as a tendency to disbelieve adults, James was indeed cynical. And evidently remains so. She does not seem much enamoured of mankind, though she believes in the existence of God and His love: "On most other things I'm capable of doubt".

Capable also of homicide, but not murder. The former would be committed in defence of some family member, or against a putative rapist, whereas the latter has an element of pre-meditation which, for James, would rule it out.

These are fairly true definitions, by which I mean ones to which most of us could give the nod. They were certainly given the nod in an unchallenging interview, which was either cut to accommodate the book extracts or simply not very incisive in the first place. Either way, there is more to P.D. James than was revealed last night.

PETER BARNARD

sore and thirsty when in half-an-hour he finished only a handful of copies, which had to be carefully handled to prevent smudging. Finally the assistants got the message, gave in to the occasion, and opened a bottle or two of Chardonnay to hand round.

Aficionados of the Steadman splatter may like to know that the insect-shaped blob on page 119 is no decoration: just a fly that was inadvertently squashed on the film and reproduced in the whole print-run.

From scratch

THE LATEST addition to Walker Books' "Decorative Arts Library" is rather a coup. Despite its modest appearance, *Point Engraving on Glass* (£9.99) is a short scholarly history of the art by its leading exponent, Laurence Whistler.

He surveys the pointillist technique from a few Roman survivals through the work of 18th-century Dutch portraitors to the British revival he himself led. Two crucial moments were the first stippled highlight (a single cherry in 1646) and the realisation that the engraver draws not in black but in light.

Since the catalogues of Whistler's own engravings are all out of print and expensive when found secondhand, the illustrations of some of his best goblets, bowls and windows make a welcome introduction to the subject.

I think I'll call it America

BY AM SHAW College of Art once declined a lecture about Saul Steinberg on the ground that the man who drew the world as seen from Manhattan is "not an artist". Arthur C. Danto could not disagree more. His introduction to *The Discovery of America* (Aurum, £30) claims "there is nothing in the whole history of art" to put alongside this drawing. This album collects Stein-

berg's childlike yet sophisticated drawings portraying America's brashness, egotianism, naivety and know-how. With cars, people, animals, writing and houses made out of interchangeable materials, Steinberg's America is, as Danto says, "an Art Deco continent". But lately in the urban jungle, destruction is winning. When Mickey Mouse becomes a terrorist, what has happened to the American dream?

JIM McCUE

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PETER BARNARD

... Times critics offer their selection of the best books for Christmas

Celebration of a golden age

ARCHITECTURE

Marcus Binney

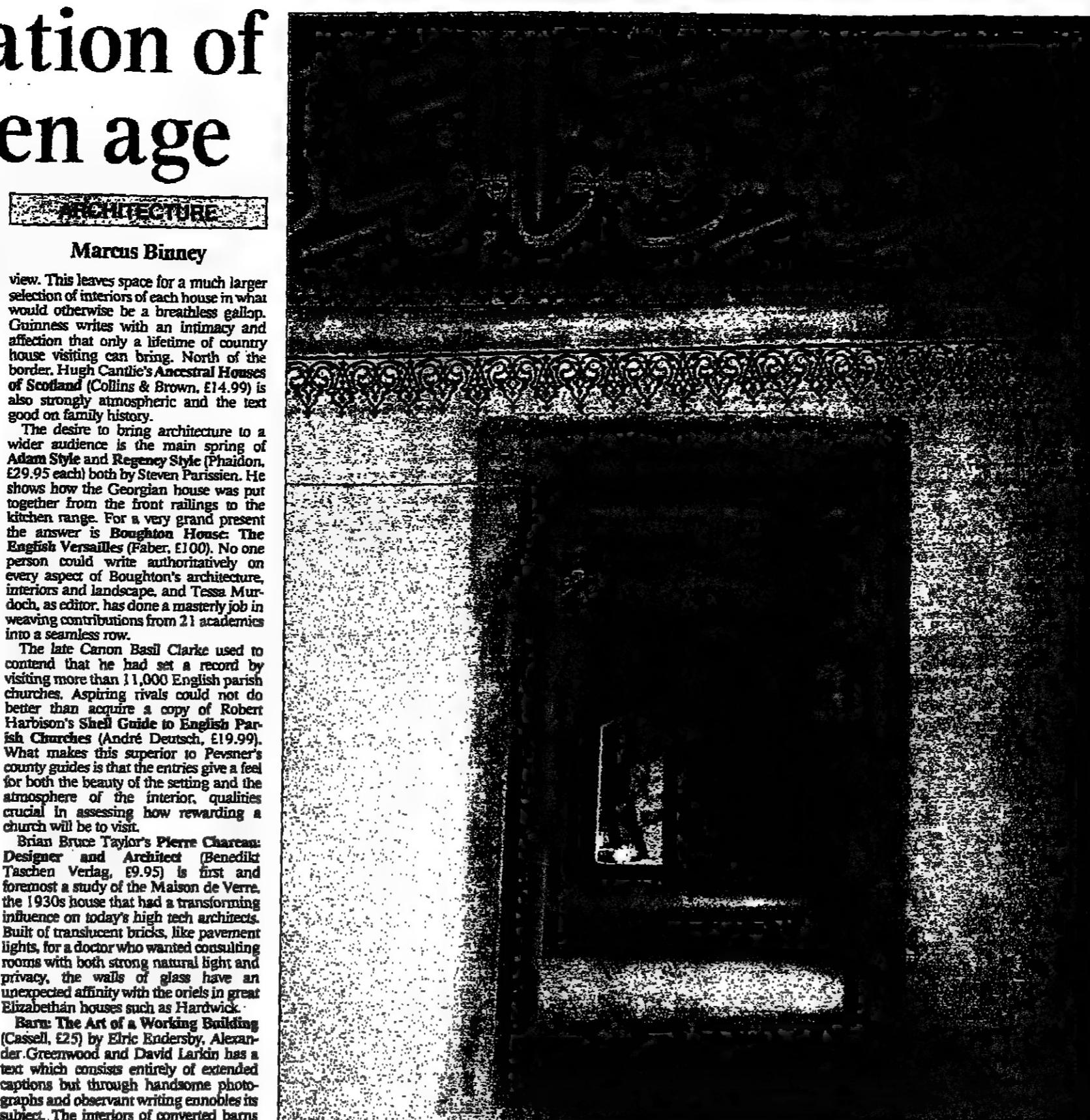
The economy may lie in ruins but architectural books have never been more lavish. This Christmas the palm goes to a sumptuous folio-sized volume *Sinan: Architect of Suleyman the Magnificent and the Ottoman Golden Age* by John Freely and Augusta Romano Burrell (Thames and Hudson, £45). Sinan, born of Christian parents and taken into service as a Janissary, was as great an architect as Michelangelo and was the author of two of the grandest of all Islamic mosques, the Suleymaniye in Istanbul and the Selimiye at Edirne, the latter built to eclipse the great dome of Santa Sophia. He was also the architect of a series of small domed mosques as beautiful as any of the Greek Cross churches of Renaissance Italy.

The text though short, is penetrating and the photographs supplemented by clever cut-away drawings. One of these shows that the bell-topped minarets at Edirne contained triple inter-twining spiral staircases, capping the famous double flights at the Chateau of Chambord.

John Whitehead's *The French Interior in the Eighteenth Century* (Lawrence King, £30) is a dazzlingly fresh book on a much worked theme. He combines a dealer's understanding of the way things are made, with great knowledge, lightly worn, of Parisian houses, chateaux and royal palaces. The text is spiced with amusing quotations from contemporary letters and journals. The illustrations are accompanied by long and observant captions. Particularly intriguing is a dice throwing machine, designed so backgammon could be played without the rattle and clatter of dice.

Wendell Garber's *Classic America: The Federal Style and Beyond* (Rizzoli, £50) is a visually enthralling introduction to some of America's most beautiful buildings, ringing the changes by mixing domestic architecture with churches, court houses and capitols. Paul Rocheleau's photographs of interiors, often spread across two pages, give you the feeling of physically stepping into a room, and thanks to the persistent use of an old-fashioned plate camera even the smallest details are pin sharp. Many of the New England houses are the more beautiful for being photographed in the snow.

Brilliant photography by Jacqueline O'Brien also makes Desmond Guinness's *Great Irish Castles and Houses* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £30) a mesmerising read. Many of her exteriors are taken from a helicopter, combining architecture, gardens and wider landscape as in an 18th-century birds-eye



Master's touch: ceramic panels quoting extracts from the Koran in passages leading to rooms for meditation and prayer in the mosque at Kadiaga Liman; from *Sinan*, published by Thames and Hudson. Photograph by Ara Guler

Heard the one about the clown princes?

James Woodall

(1956) and *The Naked Truth* (1958). His long-term problem seems to have been that he was almost schizoid. In a frank interview with Blake Edwards (director of the *Pink Panther*) at the end of Michael Starr's *Peter Sellers: A Film History* (Robert Hale, £14.95), we read: "Sellers would have gone on to become crazier and crazier... I think he was so close to being certifiable, and I don't say that facetiously, that at some point in his life he would have... killed himself." Elsewhere Edwards suggests Sellers was a "paranoid schizophrenic".

Given Sellers's extraordinary range, an account of his life might run "the Many Ages of Peter Sellers". No such variety with Benny Hill: the

moyens sensuels played by Sellers, culminating in the epic buffoonery of Inspector Clouseau, have hidden one quite so unstable? The answer is yes, but Starr's book is not the one to tell us about it. His 230-odd pages of dreamy text trace Sellers's career through individualised accounts of his 43 films and though reminding us how incomparable some of his performances were — in films such as *I'm All Right, Jack*, *Dr Strangelove* and *Being There* — Starr can only glance at the persistent, sometimes debilitating personality flaws that haunted Sellers's complex genius. For a full analysis, a real biography is called for.

Given Sellers's extraordinary range, an account of his life might run "the Many Ages of Peter Sellers". No such variety with Benny Hill: the

tubby cherub with the wicked grin and seaside postcard sense of humour had one age — about ten — for the three or four decades he had television audiences chortling everywhere. The most amazing thing about Hill was his exportability: Europe doted on him. Thames Television dropped him in 1989, and he died three years later.

That, in essence, is the Hill story: a simple one of global success ending in penitence. The two biographies on offer here, Dennis Kirkland, *Benny: The True Story* (Smith Gryphon, £15.99), the other by *Daily Express* columnist Margaret Forwood, *The Real Benny Hill* (Robson Books, £14.95), have a hard job embellishing

this. Hill did not lead an interesting life. Still, the authors only had seven months to get their hard cover obits ready for Christmas, so a gripping and revealing read from either is hardly to be expected.

William Hill's biggest mistake in *Timber Ye Not!* (Grafton, £5.99 pbk), a flimsy life of Frankie Howard, who died on the same day this year — Easter Day — as Hill, is that he attempts to be as witty in his tabloid prose as Howard was in his stand-up routines. And Frankie was always best in the flesh (not an attempt at a Howard joke). He led a more colourful life, too, than Hill, being, for starters, openly and promiscuously gay — not that Hill makes much of this.

Barry Took's anodyne double profile in *Star Turns*, (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £12.99) a homage to both comedians, touches on sex but is psychologically unilluminating. Rather, the book serves to show how different the comedians were — Hill a master of television, Howard of working a live audience, as his brilliant 1990 performance at the Oxford Union showed.

Mel Smith and Griff Rhys Jones are from a younger comic generation. Their new show is on our screens now. The dialogues collected in *Head to Head: Smith and Jones* (Fontana, £5.99), a stocking-filler pamphlet, are from a previous series. Jokes from crackers are what people read at Christmas, not old scripts. So you could, of course, use the book for laying the turkey remains on. Or not buy it, and watch the new show instead.

Preserving the image at any cost

Benedict Nightingale



Harrison and O'Toole: in the limelight, on and off stage

temptuous of others, ruthless in his pursuit of his own ends, snobbish, lecherous, envious, disloyal, misogynistic, and much else besides. His very last words, addressed to a solicitor's son from his hospital bed, were all too characteristic: "I'll tell you what you can do. You can drop dead."

True, he could occasionally be generous and, true, he probably suffered from feelings of insecurity, but does insecurity justify, say, his reaction to finding that one of his mistresses, Carole Landis, had overdosed on pills while he was shooting the film *Unfaithfully Yours*? Instead of calling

an ambulance, he opted for damage-limitation and image-control, and by the time a doctor saw her, she was way past reviving.

Walker has, of course, the advantage of having a dead monster to anatomise. Writing about the living is a trickier enterprise. That is especially so if, like Albert Finney, they decline to be formally interviewed, and almost more so if, like Peter O'Toole, they insist on doing the interviewing themselves. Thus Quentin Falls breezes competently enough through Finney's career in *Albert Finney in Character* (Robson, £16.95)

Now who said that first?

REFERENCE

Philip Howard

Reference books are suitable Christmas presents for the bookish, if you are not confident enough to inflict their reading on them, do not know whether they own the book already, and wish to avoid the amiable cop-out of a book-token. The fourth edition of *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, edited by Angela Partridge (OUP, £25), is the biggest boat in the reference armada, beautifully designed and arranged. It has 40 per cent new entries, arranged alphabetically by authors from Anita Brookner to Alice Walker, and Woody Allen to Julian Barnes. The trouble is that any bookish person is going to own a previous edition, which is more satisfactory than this new edition on the quotes that have become part of the literary freemasonry. It takes time for a quotation to become part of the patois of the nation, and too many of the modern quotations read like literary mayflies rather than parrots with a shelf-life for the centuries.

The *Bloomsbury Concise Dictionary of Quotations*, edited by Anne Stibbs and John Daintith (Bloomsbury, £12.99), is one of the genre of thesauruses arranged alphabetically by themes such as virtue and vice, rabbits and ruthlessness, snobbery and (invariably) the biggest entry sex.

The *Oxford Dictionary of Modern English*, edited by John Ayto and John Simpson (joint editors of *The Oxford English Dictionary*) (OUP, £13.95) preserves the latest of the most evanescent registers of language, with citations from rags and mags and literary authors. Why no "Essex girl"? Ed. *The Methuen Dictionary of Clichés*, edited by Christine Ammer (Methuen, £15.99) seems a perverse undertaking, like a collection of ill germs, since good writers are supposed to avoid clichés like the Plague. Bathroom book for those who like to know who first plagiarised stiff upper lips.

Brewer's Myth and Legend, edited by J.C. Cooper (Cassell, £12.99), brings in myths from cultures too exotic by the founding fathers. If great giants of the world or horses in legend are your bag, here are herds of them. *Brewer's Names*, edited by that jolly lexicographer Adrian Room (Cassell, £16.99), is useful and fun.

The *Times Guide to English Style and Usage*, edited by Simon Jenkins (Times Books, £7.99), gives the changing rules we make for English at the word laboratory. You do not have to agree with it all. I certainly don't.

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South Africa weakened by Schulz's withdrawal



Matthews surprise pick

SOUTH Africa suffered a serious setback yesterday when Brett Schulz, their hostile left-arm fast bowler, was ruled out from the second Test match with India, which starts here today.

With Allan Donald, Schulz formed the main part of a pace attack that it was hoped would extract the maximum benefit from the granite-hard pitch prepared at the Wanderers ground.

Wessels and Aharuddin, the captains, both believe this match could decide the series and for South Africa to lose their new young fast bowler is a severe blow.

Schulz had already ripped the Indian batting apart in a four-day game earlier on the

tour. He took the most dangerous bowler early in the drawn first Test at Durban before retiring with a hamstring injury. Outright results are not expected from the third and fourth Tests at Port Elizabeth and Cape Town.

Schulz did not feel the hamstring during two separate workouts at the nets yesterday but was left stiff and tired. Peter Pollock, the chairman of the South African selectors, said it was obvious that Schulz was not 100 per cent fit and that he could not be risked.

South Africa have declined to send for Snell, who at Bloemfontein this week looked distinctly fiery for an Invitation XI. They have re-

placed Schulz with Matthews, who was unimpressive in the same game. His previous good record at the Wanderers has always been achieved when more grass has been left on the pitch. McMillan passed a fitness test yesterday on a back strain and the fourth fast bowler will be Pringle, whose main forte is swing.

The pitch was laid last year and has been used for just one limited-overs match. Its grassless, clay surface shimmered like glass yesterday, just as pitches do at Sabina Park in Jamaica. Donald, now free from injury worries, will still be a danger if he bowls with better control than he did at Durban. There is no question though that Schulz's absence will greatly cheer India. Twice at least in Australia last winter they were destroyed by the left-arm speed of Reid and Whitney.

South Africa have also opted for an extra batsman in Cronje, with Henry, the left-

arm spinner, becoming twelfth man. Apart from Wessels and Amre, the leading batsmen of both teams failed to deliver big scores at Durban.

India's more accomplished tail, however, saw them through hence Cronje's inclusion. Rhodes always has claims to be selected because of his fielding but at No. 5 at Durban he looked one if not two places too high in the order.

India have named 12, with Banerjee the possible fourth fast bowler ahead of Sharma. Whether Banerjee will out-Kumble is uncertain.

South Africans have little experience of good spinners in their domestic games and in Cronje, with Henry, the left-

Kumble's top spin and googlies bowled briskly in the manner of Chandrasekhar, could gain him the vote.

An electric atmosphere prevails locally about this match and should the pitch prove as quick as anticipated, the umpires will need to be alert to the new International Cricket Council (ICC) rule limiting short-pitched bowling.

One change from Durban is that Steve Bucknor, the independent umpire, will take his turn at rotating and the two South African officials, Cyril Mitchley and Barry Lambson, will stand together on the third day.

Clive Lloyd is again the match referee and heard an unofficial card-marking on S. Banerjee.

GOLF

Floyd still hoping to win the Open to crown his career

FROM MITCHELL PLATT
GOLF CORRESPONDENT
IN SYDNEY

RAYMOND Floyd, who even at the age of 50 remains one of the fiercest competitors in the game, dropped his guard as he prepared for the Australian Open, which starts here today at The Lakes golf club. "If I could make a pact with the devil, I'd take a British Open and happily retire the next day," he said.

His desire to complete the full set of major championships dates from 1986 when, at 44, he became the oldest winner of the US Open. He had won the US PGA Championship (1969 and 1982) and the Masters (1976).

"If I keep playing the way I am now then I honestly believe it is possible," Floyd said. "I gave myself a chance in both the Masters and the Open this year, and I think it would be easier for me to win a major than a regular Tour event. There are a lot of players who can win regular events; there are only about 20 with a real chance of winning a major."

This has been a mixed year for Floyd. In February, his home was destroyed by fire and the family lost almost everything it owned, including his golf trophies. Two weeks later, he won the Doral Open, and after turning 50 in September, he quickly made his mark on the US PGA Seniors' Tour with a tournament victory.

"The Seniors' Tour gives me a chance to have fun with the

guy I first played with when I turned pro in 1961," Floyd said. "But age is but a number. There are fellows older than me who are younger, and fellows younger who are older. It's a mental state, how you feel. The day I enter a tournament and I can't feel that I can win, then that is the day I will quit."

That day is not on the immediate horizon. He admitted it was a tough decision to miss Thanksgiving Day at home but he shares with Jack Nicklaus, who won six times, the belief that the Australian Open is the fifth major championship.

"I have a good chance," he said. "Right now, I can truthfully say that I don't think there's anyone in the game hitting the ball better than I am."

Craig Parry, who won the Australian Masters in February and the Australian PGA championship on Sunday, Wayne Riley, the defending champion, and Ian Baker-Finch, the 1991 Open champion, head the Australian challenge in the absence of Greg Norman.

SCHOOLS SPORT

Britton benefiting from expansive approach

BY CHRISTOPHER DIGHTON

THE past three rugby matches for the Newcastle under Lyme School full back, Jonathan Britton, have been highly productive. Britton has scored a remarkable 75 points collecting ten in a 15-3 win over Denstone; 18 in a 32-10 defeat by King's Macclesfield; and 47 as King Edward VI, Stafford, were beaten 11-10.

"He has benefited from our open style of play. By spreading it wide, we make space for the full back coming into the line and Jonathan has made the most of his chances," Tony Askew, the master-in-charge of rugby at the school, said.

Newcastle-under-Lyme face a tough task when they play King Edward's, Aston, next week. King Edward's are former winners of the Daily Mail Under-15 Cup and that suc-

ceeded from strained stomach muscles which at one stage made him doubtful for last Sunday's game against Wales.

■ Bath have called up Craig Raymond, at stand-off half, and Dave Egerton, at No. 8, for their third-round Pilkington Cup tie at Waterloo. The pair replace Stuart Barnes and Ben Clarke, who are on duty for the Barbarians.

Huw Davies, the former England stand-off half, whose match-winning performance took Wasps back to the top of the Courage League last weekend, has been dropped for their cup tie at Rosslyn Park. Adrian Thompson, whose delayed return from Dubai gave Davies his chance, is restored to the side.

Moseley have asked fraud squad detectives to continue investigating accounting irregularities at the club. West Midlands police were called in four months ago when about £30,000 of a record £120,000 loss was unaccounted for.

JUDO

Reshuffle floors Britain's key coaches

THREE months after guiding Britain to two silver and two bronze medals at the Barcelona Olympics, the three key coaching figures have left (A Special Correspondent writes).

Arthur Mapp, the men's team manager, has been made redundant after a reorganisation in which full-time managers will be replaced by part-time trainers. He is considering going to an industrial tribunal.

Roy Inman OBE, who took British women's judo to the highest international level, has resigned with his assistant coach, Ann Hughes.

"I can confirm that I am no longer employed by the British Judo Association (BJA) but

that is all I am prepared to say at the moment," Inman said. This suggests a number of unresolved issues between him and the BJA.

In a statement, Hughes said: "I was told that I would still have a job in the New Year and, four days later, I received a redundancy notice."

Reorganisation of the national squad system has been orchestrated by George Kerr, elected chairman of the BJA, and Seth Birch, the national coach. In July, Birch became technical director, running the national squads and supervising Inman and Mapp — even in coaching, in which he has had virtually no top-level experience.

Mapp claims this was done without consultation and in contravention of his contract.

Kerr refused to comment but said he will issue an official statement at the British national championships at Crystal Palace on December 6.

Mapp, 39, was appointed manager of the Britain men's team in 1986. "This has come as a severe blow to me," he said. "I have given my life to judo and I think I have cause to feel bitter."

The coach-manager spotlight now falls on Neil Adams, the 1981 world champion, and Mark Earle, a former international. They are almost certain to feature in Kerr's plans for the future.

ICE HOCKEY

Warriors march to top after double victory

WHITLEY Warriors, with wins over Billingham Bombers and Durham Wasps, are the new leaders in the premier division of the Heineken League (Norman de Mesquita writes).

The first division continues to be a case of Basingstoke Beavers first and the rest nowhere. Two more wins, over Medway Bears and Romford Raiders, extended the Beavers' lead to 11 points over Sheffield Steelers.

Cardiff Devils and Bracknell Bees, who shared ten goals, are joint second, one point behind the Warriors.

Nottingham Panthers continue to give cause for concern — after their dismissal by the

Devils from the Benson and Hedges Cup, they lost to Norwich and Peterborough Pirates, who had themselves lost their previous five games.

The first division continues to be a case of Basingstoke Beavers first and the rest nowhere. Two more wins, over Medway Bears and Romford Raiders, extended the Beavers' lead to 11 points over Sheffield Steelers.

The Steelers introduced Tim Salmon to their line-up against Swindon Wildcats and he obliged with two goals and three assists in a 7-5 win.

Results, page 38

Inman: resigned

Answers from page 40
ATELIER
(c) A workshop, and artist's or sculptor's studio, from the French, cf. Spanish *astillero*: a dock to build ships on, from *astilla* raft, lath, chip: "The great atelier where wheel and lathe were hummed."

STAIRS
(c) A branch of a family, in law, the person who with his descendants forms a branch of a family, from the Latin *stirps* stem, stock: "His brothers succeed to the exclusive of his issue female, and each brother becomes a stirps."

BONIFACE
(c) The name of the jovial innkeeper in Farquhar's *Bonx's Stratagem* 1707, whence taken as the generic proper name of innkeepers, some host, or the landlord of the time. "The devotion of the white, actual hostess of the inn upon the poor guide wife was very common among the Scottish bonnaces."

AVULSION
(c) Forkile separation, the action of pulling off, plucking out, or tearing away, from the Latin *ab* away + *vellere*, *recessus* to pull, pluck: "By avulsion or division of the Sea, Sicily was divided and severed from Italy, Cyprus from Syria."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE
Black forced resignation with 1...g3! and if 2 hxg3 Rxg3# mating.

Champ
chase e

back

TAUNTS

gifford

TAUNTS

McRae leads British finishers in sixth

Sainz celebrates at the double after Kankkunen's crash

By STEPHEN SLATER

AFTER four days and over 1,500 miles, Carlos Sainz, of Spain, celebrated double success last night. For the second time, he won both the Lombard RAC Rally and the world rally championship.

The 1990 champion's victory was sealed when Juha Kankkunen lost second place after hitting a rock in the early stages of the final leg of the rally in Scotland. The Finn staged a storming recovery to finish the rally in third place behind Ari Vatanen.

Colin McRae also slid off the track but he survived to finish as the leading British driver in sixth place.

Despite heavy rain, thousands of fans again lined the forest tracks as the cars entered the start of six special stages before the cars returned to the rally finish in Chester.

Many supporters had waited through the night, sleeping in their cars after driving from Kielder forest in Northumberland, where the previous special stage was cancelled after two damaged cars blocked the track.

Their persistence was rewarded with a dramatic start to the day. Halfway down the opening stage, Kankkunen hit a pothole at high speed and was blinded as muddy water cascaded on to his windscreen.

Before he could regain visibility, the Lancia hit a rock, damaging the suspension and

losing almost three minutes as the car limped to the finish for repairs.

As Sainz passed his rival's damaged car on the following road section, he knew the world title was over. "Kankkunen's car is bent, a bit like bananas," Sainz, over the radio to his team, said. "Now we can drive to finish."

However, the drama was far from over as McRae's Subaru slid into a ditch and lost four minutes before heading for repairs to the damaged suspension. Undaunted, McRae immediately stormed into the next stage at Glengapp, setting the fastest time at a pace that won the praise of his teammates, Ari Vatanen and Bruno Berglund, in second place.

"That was by far the most slippery stage of the rally," Vatanen said. "My heart was in my mouth."

Kankkunen recovered from his accident to set the fastest time on the two final special stages of the rally, the 1991 champion moving to third place ahead of Matrika Aien and ignoring the loss of his championship crown. "I'm concentrating hard, no more problems," he said.

For Sainz, 30, the 200-mile final road section to Chester gave him time to savour his success as he joined Miki Biasion and Kankkunen as multiple world champions.

"This is a dream come

true," he said. "It was a really difficult rally, very hard all the time. It was far out from the first corner of the first special stage on Sunday and the race was with Juha from the word go."

"Even when McRae was leading, my only thought was to beat Juha for the championship. It has been a year of fighting; it is very important to me."

Despite McRae's disappointment in failing to become the first British driver to win the RAC since 1976, there was some good news for the Lanarkshire clan.

McRae's younger brother, Alister, 21, took victory in the group N category — for standard production cars — over eight minutes ahead of Gregoire de Mevius of Belgium, who won the world group N title in his Nissan Sunny.

Alister finished the rally in fourth place overall, the fourth British driver after Russell Brookes, in thirteenth, Malcolm Wilson, in ninth, and the older McRae, in sixth.

"I'm obviously glad to finish but a bit disappointed not to be higher up after going so well on the first two days," Colin McRae said. "I'll remember Grizedale well but for all the wrong reasons."

"I've learned a lot and gained valuable experience. I'll be even more determined to win my home rally next year."

Many of the turbo-charged, four-wheel drive supercars were humbled by the 600cc Trabant, driven by Michael Kablitz. It refused to start on the final day but, after responding to a push from the co-driver, Gunter Friedmann, it finally emerged from the forest in 98th place — 3hr 28min behind Sainz.

FINAL POSITIONS

LOMBARD RAC RALLY: 1. C Sainz and L Moya (Sp), Toyota, 5hr 23min 0sec; 2. A Vatanen and J Kankkunen (Fin), 5hr 25min 22sec; 3. J Kankkunen and J Pironen (Fin), Lancia, 5hr 25min 51sec; 4. M Aien and I Kovalski (Fin), Toyota, 5hr 26min 35sec; 5. M Biasion and T Sivonen (I), Ford, 5hr 26min 47sec; 6. C McRae and D Ringer (GB), Subaru, 5hr 31min 14sec; 7. K Esson and S Palmer (GB), Ford, 5hr 32min 28sec; 8. M Makinen and S Hakanen (Fin), Mitsubishi, 5hr 35min 07sec; 9. M Wilson and B Thomas, Lancia 28.
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Sainz alive: Spain's world rally champion hurtles to the Lombard RAC title yesterday

Nebiolo resists calls for spread of prize-money

PRIMO Nebiolo, the president of the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF), reiterated here yesterday a determination to resist the introduction of prize-money at world championships and, by inference, the Olympic Games (writes David Miller). Athletes' agents have been demanding prize-money running into millions of dollars for next year's championships at Stuttgart.

At a press conference before a gala to mark the creation of the IAAF here in Stockholm 50 years ago, Nebiolo declared that prize-money for the senior championships was wholly against IAAF policy.

"Of course athletes must be rewarded," he said, "but they must not lose touch with the

spirit of the sport. Grand prix events [at which there is substantial prize-money] and world championships are quite different occasions and the athletes must understand that."

The result of the IAAF poll for the male athlete of the year, announced yesterday, was also unequivocal. Kevin Young, the 400 metre hurdler who broke the world record on the way to an Olympic gold medal, comfortably beat Moses Kiptanui, of Kenya, and Carl Lewis, Linford Christie, the British 100 metre gold medal-winner, finished sixth.

In the women's poll, Heike Henkel, the German high jumper, narrowly beat her compatriot, Heike Drechsler. Sally Gunnell, of Britain, was tenth.

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SPORTS POLITICS

'Non-athletes' to share sports payouts

By JOHN GOODBOY

GOLF, shooting and archery are to be allowed by the government to receive grants from the Foundation for Sports and the Arts which gives about £44 million a year to British sport. Graham Endicott, secretary of the foundation, told delegates to the conference of the Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR) in Bournemouth.

There has been an outcry since the foundation was set up last year that "non-athletic sports" could not benefit. Thousands of clubs and organisations have been unable to apply for grants from the foundation for improving facilities, because of the wording of the original legislation.

But after pressure from several national governing bodies, the foundation has now persuaded the Treasury to a new formula in its funding.

Endicott added that the trustees were also keen to include "competitive games of the mind" like chess, but so far the government has given no indication whether it will agree to this change.

The foundation and the CCPR are also setting up a Sports Club of the Year competition with prizes of £10,000 and £5,000 for the best two.

Endicott said that the foundation was willing to set aside about £200,000 for the training before the 1994 Commonwealth Games in Canada. He admitted that there had been problems of communication

with the applicants, who average 500 a week. Many had been approved, but the foundation was waiting for the new formula in its funding.

Earlier, Tom Pendry, the shadow minister for sport, criticised the "hidden crisis" of sports funding in Britain. He pointed out that local sports funding through the urban programme had fallen by £40 million during the past five years and that in the coming year total expenditure by local authorities on capital expenditure is set to fall to less than half its level of 1989-90.

Pendry also said that more than 1,000 voluntary sports clubs in England and Wales were denied relief last year by local authorities, some of whom have been forced to sell playing fields to shore up their finances.

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SPORT IN BRIEF

Britons upset favourites

WAYNE Davies, the world champion, and Lachie Deuchar, the favourite, lost to British opponents in the quarter-finals of the George Wimpey British Open real tennis championships at Queen's Club yesterday.

Davies, of Australia, was beaten in straight sets by Chris Ronaldson, whose form belied his veteran status. Deuchar lost Jonathan Howell 6-0, 6-1 but lost concentration in the third set. Howell meets Robert Fehay, another Australian, in the semi-finals. Ronaldson plays the No. 2 seed, Julian Snow.

Ligier sells

MOTOR RACING: Guy Ligier has sold his Formula One team to Cyril de Rouvre, a French businessman, after 17 years in top-level competition.

Sales pitch

CRICKET: Glamorgan have cut membership fees from £45 to £15 for next season to compensate supporters for the reduced home schedule brought about by four-day cricket. The deputy chairman, David Morgan, said he could "see Tony Lewis in the Pizza Express National League as soon as next year."

DAVIS'S CUP BOOST

YACHTING: Rod Davis, New Zealand's America's Cup skipper, won all seven races on the first day of the round-robin eliminations in the Steinlager Cup in Auckland yesterday.

BANQUET QUERIED

SWIMMING: FINA, the world governing body, is to seek explanation from the German federation after it imposed a six-month ban — a year less than the minimum — on Astrid Strauss, who failed a drugs test in March. Fina may try to increase the ban.

AGGRESSION, ABUSIVE LANGUAGE AND GAMESManship are just some of the things an umpire has to put up with," he said.

"I realise that clubs are under increasing pressure but I have a feeling that certain players are being goaded into the kind of behaviour which I find intolerable."

Ford, who is to make his feelings known to the league committee, said that he blamed the Hockey Association as well as the league officials for the deterioration in the standard of behaviour.

They should do something more practical than merely writing to the clubs when complaints are made," he said. His last appearance at a

HOCKEY

Umpire resigns over abuse from players

By SYDNEY FRISKIN

RICHARD Ford, a southern counties and England international umpire, has refused to officiate in any more games in the Pizza Express National League because of verbal abuse from players.

Ford, who has been umpiring matches in the league since its inception in 1988, said: "I had actually decided at the end of last season that I had taken enough and, as the situation has not improved this season, I have decided to call it a day as far as the league is concerned."

He will continue to umpire at regional level and at all indoor tournaments. He will officiate at the Glenfiddich indoor international tournament at Glasgow in January and at the European indoor club championship B division in Brussels in February.

He has so far umpired 12 outdoor international matches and 22 indoor.

□ Two second-half goals enabled Oxford University, who are unbeaten in Peroni League games this season, to share the honours with Ladykillers in the annual match at the North Oxford sports ground yesterday.

Paddy O'Brien converted short corners for Ladykillers in the fifth and seventh minutes but Oxford fought back with a penalty stroke from Graham and a goal by Laird, a substitute, following their ninth short corner.

They

CAMBRIDGE
GIVE OXFORD
LITTLE TO FEAR

SPORT

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 25 1992

THE TIMES SATURDAY NOVEMBER 21 1992

MOTOR RALLYING 38

SAINZ CLINCHES
RAC AND
WORLD TITLES

Football League is ready to set a precedent by electing as president someone not connected with a club

McKeag sure to retain League post

By LOUISE TAYLOR

THE Football League is expected to elect its first independent president next Monday. Gordon McKeag, who has held the post since January, was elected while a director of Newcastle United. But he is standing for re-election, having broken all his links with the first division club.

Even though McKeag's re-election would represent a radical departure from tradition, League officers are confident that he will be re-appointed.

His present powers and functions will remain unaltered and he will be far more than just a figurehead. His unsalaried appointment will last at least until the League's next annual meeting in the summer, when he is likely to stand again.

Monday's extraordinary meeting at Walsall will also elect a newcomer to the League's board of directors, increasing its size from six to seven. He will represent the North-east regional group — Barnsley, Bradford City, Darlington, Doncaster Rovers, Harlepool United, Huddersfield Town, Hull City, Newcastle, Rotherham, Scarborough, Sunderland, and York City.

McKeag, 64, a solicitor, is a former chairman of Newcastle. He lost out in a prolonged, and acrimonious, power struggle with Sir John Hall, the present chairman, who is on record as saying he would stand for the vacancy created by McKeag's independent role — which might bring a touch of soap opera to Football League politics. Their



Strictly horizontal: Zeyer, left, of Kaiserslautern, and Jonk, of Ajax, fly through the air with reckless abandon in determined pursuit of the ball in the Uefa Cup match in Amsterdam which the home side won 2-0 with Jonk scoring the second goal in the 87th minute.

hostile relationship was highlighted in October when Newcastle refused to provide McKeag with a ticket for the derby game against Sunderland at Roker Park. McKeag finally watched the game after receiving a ticket from Sunderland.

Support for McKeag is so strong among League clubs that, in the unlikely event of him not being elected independent chairman, at least one first division club is pre-

pared to circumvent the problem by making him a director.

John Barnes has been guaranteed a place in Liverpool's starting line-up at home to Crystal Palace on Saturday after his match-winning return as a substitute two days ago.

Barnes, who replaced Ian Rush after only 17 minutes against Queens Park Rangers and set up Ronny Rosenthal's late winner, will make his first full appearance since the Achilles tendon injury that

ruled him out of the European Championships last summer.

The Liverpool manager, Graeme Souness, said yesterday: "It's only games which will get John fit again, so he will start against Palace."

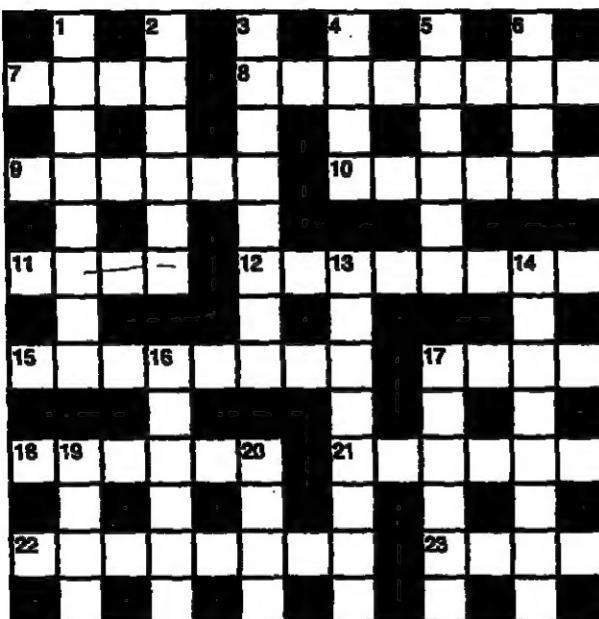
However, good news involving Barnes has been tempered by the loss of Rush. The Welsh international forward looks certain to be rested after a recurring groin injury and could miss not only Saturday's game with Palace but also next Tuesday's Coca-Cola Cup

injury. The Celtic manager, Liam Brady, has been ordered to make a personal appearance before the Scottish Football Association next month.

Oldham are thought to be ready to take the out-of-favour Chelsea goalkeeper, Dave Seaman, on loan while they search for a full-time replacement for John Halksworth, who has been ruled out for the rest of the season with a wrist

injury. Police intervened during an argument between the two benches after Celtic scored their second goal in a 2-0 win at Parkhead.

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 2955



ACROSS

- 7 Military quarters (4)
- 8 Of hypothetical interest (8)
- 9 Ship's radio officer (6)
- 10 US currency (6)
- 11 Female deer (4)
- 12 Male and female insects (6)
- 13 Triangular gable (8)
- 14 Logs vessel (4)
- 15 Robert, I Claudio author (6)
- 21 Fresh (6)
- 22 Indication (8)
- 23 Rout (4)

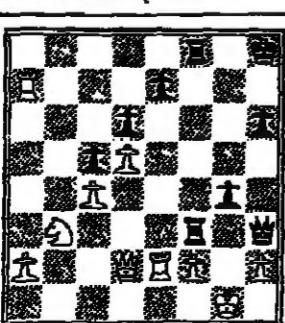
SOLUTIONS TO NO 2954
ACROSS: 1 Bible 4 Paddock 8 Tremulous 9 Era 10 Nod 11 Showpiece 12 Other 13 Every 16 Paymaster 18 Vim 20 Sod 21 Ingenuity 22 Dilemma 23 Essay
DOWN: 1 Baton 2 Breadth 3 Equestrian 4 Photos 5 Disappearance 6 obese 7 Knavery 12 Opposed 14 Environs 15 Stigma 17 Yodel 19 Messy

WINNING MOVE

By RAYMOND KEENE, Chess Correspondent

This position is from the game Kovalevskii — Gagarin, Russia 1992. White, being a piece up, may have entertained hopes of winning the game. If so, Gagarin's next move would have brought him down to earth. What was it?

Solution on page 36



CROSSWORD ENTHUSIASTS: For mail order details of all Times Crossword Books and The Times Computer Crossword software for beginners or experts, (runs on most PCs), telephone Atom Ltd on 081 852 4575 (24 hours) or call CDS Doncaster on 0302 890 000. Postage free until Christmas (applies UK only).

WORD-WATCHING

By PHILIP HOWARD

ATELIER
a. A potter
b. The Canadian spruce
c. A studio
STIRPS
a. Paint thinner
b. Working-class men

Solutions on page 36

c. The original ancestor
BONIFACE
a. A beautiful baby
b. The skull
c. An innkeeper
AVULSION
a. A flock of vultures
b. Unwillingness
c. Forceful separation

Juventus overcome absence of Platt

By LOUISE TAYLOR

ANDREAS Möller and Dino Baggio scored in each half to earn Juventus a virtual passage into the Uefa Cup quarter-finals with a 2-1 win over Sigma Olomouc in Czechoslovakia yesterday. The German international midfield player struck on 23 minutes and Baggio, a defender, doubled the score in the 76th minute of the third round, first leg tie.

Jan Marosi pulled one back for the Czechs in the last minute, but Juventus, who are second in the Italian league, are unlikely to be beaten in the return leg in a fortnight's time and would appear to be as-

sured of a berth in the next round. The Italians were not even at full strength. Roberto Baggio and David Platt, the England internationals, were missing with injury, but their absence made little difference.

A number of clubs and players were yesterday reflecting on their good fortune that the Football League has ruled that sendings off and bookings incurred in the Anglo-Italian Cup would not lead to domestic suspensions.

Tuesday night's round of matches in the international stage resulted in a flurry of red and yellow cards, crowned by a brawl at Newcastle United as they lost 1-0 to Ascoli.

Kevin Keegan, the Newcastle manager, who helped police placate feuding players, said: "You keep thinking you have seen it all in football, but then you see something like this. In the back of your mind, you know that when it is the Italian temperament against the English temperament something is going to happen."

Trouble flared after David Kelly, the United forward, was dismissed seven minutes from time. Keegan said: "I have never seen anything like it in my life. I was trying to get hold of their coach to stop him going back in a casket to Italy. I don't know what was wrong

with him. He had gone completely."

At Upington Park, Trevor Morley, the West Ham United forward, was sent off for headbutting a Reggiana defender, but his side still won 2-0, thanks to two goals from Clive Allen. A Cremonese player was sent off at Tranmere Rovers where Rovers lost 2-1.

The organising committee of the Anglo-Italian Cup was meeting in Pisa last night to review the situation.

There was also trouble in the FA Cup at Port Vale where Vale beat Stoke City 3-1 in a first-round replay. Stoke supporters responded by causing £5,000 worth of damage.

Floodlit Tests are on the way

FROM RICHARD STREETON IN JOHANNESBURG

TEST cricket under floodlights was "absolutely certain" development, Sir Colin Cowdrey, the International Cricket Council (ICC) chairman, forecast here yesterday.

Sir Colin was answering questions at a press conference about the popularity of the one-day game as opposed to five-day Tests.

Clive Lloyd, the former West Indies captain and ICC referee at the second Test here between South Africa and India, which starts today, agreed with Sir Colin's view.

Lloyd pointed out that even in India and Pakistan, and certainly in the Caribbean, Test crowds were becoming smaller and smaller. "I do not see why cricket cannot change in the direction of floodlit Tests," he said. Lloyd said early evening dew might be a problem for England but possibly a four o'clock start would be a compromise.

All the ICC member boards around the world were addressing themselves to the public's preference for one-day cricket. Sir Colin confirmed that he did not wish, however, to pre-empt forthcoming ICC discussions on the issue. "Perhaps the answer lies in some kind of a combined package," he said. "We have to preserve five-day cricket. Not to do so would be a disaster."

He said Test matches had an enormous following through newspapers and other media. The first-class game

in general had to be regarded as the version of the game which made other forms viable. "This whole problem, though, exercises us all constantly."

The enormous success of one-day cricket everywhere was bringing more and more interest and many more countries into cricket each year. The five-day game might not have the same pace but "to chip away at it in any way would be a mistake."

Lloyd said Test cricket could no longer afford to charge exorbitant prices. Ticket costs had to be reduced and he praised South Africa for leading the way by bringing down prices for the Test match today. He hoped others would take similar action shortly.

Dr Ali Becher, managing director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa, also commended the Transvaal Cricket Board for making 40 per cent reductions in the original ticket prices.

Operation for Desert Orchid

DESERT Orchid, one of the most popular racemes of the modern era, was last night fighting for his life following an operation for a severe bout of colic at Newmarket.

The grey, who retains his celebrity status despite being retired from racing last season, was reported by his owner, Richard Burridge, to be "not at all well."

Burridge said: "He was taken to Newmarket by my father's vet yesterday with a bad case of colic. It got worse, and they discovered that he had a twisted gut."

"He was operated on this morning and they removed part of the lower intestine. He's not at all well, but so far so good. We'll know more in two or three days, but the signs are encouraging."

"He's in the best possible hands, and we're praying for the best. This operation can be successful, and obviously he's a real fighter."



Cowdrey: traditionalist

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Parrott's accuracy keeps Swail in his chair

By PHIL YATES

JOHN Parrott confirmed that he is the man to beat at the Royal Liver Assurance United Kingdom snooker championship with an impressive display in the opening session of his quarter-final against Joe Swail in Preston yesterday.

Parrott, playing with the self-assurance one would expect from the winner of two tournaments already this season, contained Swail with tight safety and outscored him with a succession of substantial breaks to carry a 6-2 lead

into today's deciding session. A break of 51 gave Swail, the world No. 53 from Belfast, the opening frame before Parrott, the defending UK champion, dominated with runs of 62, 47, 35, 34, 66 and 103, which at five minutes 15 seconds gave him the lead in the race for the event's fastest-century break prize.

Swail totalled only 34 points in this period. He comfortably won the seventh frame but Parrott re-established a four-frame cushion by closing the session with a contribution of 64. A clearance of 31 to pink

gave White the first frame. A spectacular double on the blue secured the second and a late 57, after Wattana had missed a straightforward red when 43-16 ahead in the sixth, made it 5-1.

Wattana, who has won ten of his previous 15 meetings with White, compiled a break of 110 in the fifth frame and a 70 in the seventh but when White stole the last of the afternoon on the pink, the Thai was facing an uphill battle.

QUARTER-FINAL SCORES: J. Parrott (Eng) leads J. Swail (N.Irel) 6-2; J. White (Eng) leads J. Wattana (Thail) 5-1.

MOTOR RALLYING 38

SAINZ CLINCHES
RAC AND
WORLD TITLES

Police enquire into incident with Flashman

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

NO SOONER had Stan Flashman, the larger-than-life chairman of Barnet FC, walked away from one trouble spot than he strode straight into another. After receiving a £50,000 fine from the Football League on Monday, police yesterday launched an enquiry into an alleged assault by Flashman on a freelance photographer.

As Flashman left the League disciplinary hearing that imposed the fine for financial irregularities he was involved in an incident with Paul Welford, representing The Sun newspaper. It was confirmed yesterday that Welford has made a statement to police.

Welford is also preparing to report Flashman to the Football Association and an FA spokesman said yesterday: "Any complaint of that nature would be taken very seriously, with a full investigation." The FA, however, would probably wait to see what action, if any, was taken by police.

Barnet are not alone in running into trouble off the field. It was confirmed yesterday that detectives in Dorset have launched an investigation into allegations of financial irregularities at the struggling non-league club, Weymouth.

The Farnborough manager, Ted Pearce, yesterday said he has not ruled out a merger with Aldershot, who have been drawing crowds of more than 2,000 to the Recreation Ground after an impressive start to the season in the Division Two.

Barnet are not alone in running into trouble off the field. It was confirmed yesterday that Aldershot Town, 1992 FA Cup winners, are in deep financial trouble with debts of £50,000 and crowds of less than 500 this season.

The Farnborough manager, Ted Pearce, yesterday said he has not ruled out a merger with Aldershot, who have been drawing crowds of more than 2,000 to the Recreation Ground after an impressive start to the season in the Division Two.

Salako has to contend with new injury worry

JOHN Salako, of Crystal Palace, is to see the American surgeon who saved his career as fears grow that he may face another long lay-off with knee trouble. The winger, who returned this season after ten months on the sidelines with knee ligament damage, will travel back to the United States tomorrow for an urgent check-up.

Salako jarred the knee in training with England before the 4-0 World Cup defeat of Turkey. The injury ruled him out of Palace's Premier League game with Nottingham Forest last Saturday.

The decision to return to the States was taken after a visit to a specialist this week.

Bobby Gould, and his backroom staff are working without contracts to help Coventry City through their financial worries. The club announced yesterday that it made a £1.4 million trading loss in the year ended last May and it owes the bank £2.2 million in loans and overdraft.

Terry Butcher, a previous manager who was dismissed last January, has taken out a High Court writ for the remaining two years of his contract — an estimated £500,000. Mick Mills and Brian Eastick, Butcher's coaches, have also sued the club after being dismissed, have settled out of court.

The Luton Town managing director, David Kohler, is thinking of co-opting a sports reporter on to the club's board.

He made the offer to the Luton Action Committee, which has been organising a campaign to force him to resign.

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